Film Quarterly

HARDCORE

NEW TECHNOLOGY

FAITH HUBLEY

FULL METAL JACKET

THE LAST EMPEROR

WINTER 1988-89

$3.50

Inside Stories

Photo: Screen Actors Guild

THE POLITICS OF GLAMOUR

Ideology and Democracy in the Screen Actors Guild

David F. Prindle

Here is a revelation of politics among America's screen royalty. Prindle portrays the actors' union as an arena for idealistic, yet intense and hard-boiled political maneuvering, where celebrity wields power and the recent split between conservatives and progressives threatens to tear the Guild apart.

"With meticulous objectivity, he's documented the radicalization of one of the last of the true craft guilds. The media labeled it 'Star Wars.' Dr. Prindle has brought it alive in terms of the men and women who were there."– **Charlton Heston**

"As a labor union the Screen Actors Guild is unique. No other union has former presidents who have moved on to become: a religious leader (Dennis Weaver), ambassador to Mexico (John Gavin), United States senator (George Murphy), governor of California and president of the United States (Ronald Reagan), so it takes a unique book like *The Politics of Glamour* to explore and explain the Guild." – **Robert Easton**

40 illustrations $24.50 clothbound

UNITED ARTISTS

The Company That Changed the Film Industry

Tino Balio

Balio tells the fascinating history of United Artists from its near bankruptcy in 1951, through its ascendancy under the management team of Arthur Krim and Robert Benjamin, to the vicissitudes that led to its sale to MGM in 1981. "Though ostensibly the story of one studio, Balio effectively uses the book as a vehicle to explore some of the social and economic forces affecting the industry." – **Mark Litwak,** *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

Illustrated $32.50 clothbound

Wisconsin

University of Wisconsin Press
114 N. Murray Street
Madison WI 53715

Film
QUARTERLY
VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 2
WINTER 1988–89

Faith Hubley: An Interview
PAT McGILLIGAN
2

Machines of the Invisible: Changes in Film Technology in the Age of Video
CHARLES EIDSVIK
18

Full Metal Genre: Kubrick's Vietnam Combat Movie
THOMAS DOHERTY
24

Hardcore: Cultural Resistance in the Postmodern
DAVID JAMES
31

Rosa Luxemburg
RICHARD PORTON
39

Love Streams
PETER HOGUE
42

The Last Emperor
FATIMAH TOBING RONY
47

Constructivism in Film: The Man with a Movie Camera
RONALD LEVACO
52

Australian Cinema
KAREN JAEHNE
55

The Generals
R. G. DAVIS
56

Controversy and Correspondence

Late Show on the Telescreen: Film Studies and the Bottom Line
BRUCE KAWIN
56

Gado's Bergman
60

Cover: John Cassavetes and Gena Rowlands in *Love Streams* (see page 42).

FILM QUARTERLY (ISSN 0015–1386) is published quarterly at the subscription prices given below by the University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720. Second-class postage paid at Berkeley, California, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to **Film Quarterly**, University of California Press, Berkeley CA 94720. $3.50 per copy, $14.00 per year for individuals; $28.00 per year for institutions. Subscribers outside USA add $3.00 for postage. Domestic claims for nonreceipt of issues should be made within 90 days of the month of publication, overseas claims within 180 days. Thereafter, the regular back issue rate will be charged for replacement. Overseas delivery is not guaranteed. Back issues available at $5.00. Editor: Ernest Callenbach. Assistant to the Editor: Bonnie Dehler. New York Editor: William Johnson. Los Angeles Editor: Michael Dempsey. Boston Editor: Randall Conrad. London Editor: Colin Young. Rome Editor: Gideon Bachmann. Advisory Editorial Board: Leo Braudy, Andries Deinum, John Fell, Brian Henderson, Albert Johnson, Marsha Kinder, Neal Oxenhandler. Views expressed in signed articles are those of the authors. Indexed in **Art Index, Book Review Index, Film Literature Index, Humanities Index, International Index to Film Periodicals, Monthly Cumulating Periodical Index,** and **Popular Periodical Index.** Printed in U.S.A. Type: Freedmen's Organization, Los Angeles. Printing: Malloy Lithographing. © 1989 by the Regents of the University of California. Back issues subsequent to Volume 18 (1965–1966) can be obtained from the University of California Press.

PAT McGILLIGAN

Faith Hubley: An Interview

John and Faith Hubley broke away from Hollywood in the mid-1950s to form their own independent, small-scale studio in New York City, making animated films in an anti-Disney visual style that was closer in form and spirit to European surrealism and impressionism. They pioneered the use of name performers and of their own children with improvised dialogue. They sponsored marvelous jazz and new-music sound tracks. Their (mostly short) films were not about talking animals, but about adult and philosophical themes: the absurdity of war, the nuclear threat, environmental concerns, overpopulation, love, marriage, childhood development, spirituality, and feminism.

The highly original and straight-from-the-heart films that resulted from their collaboration have been feted worldwide—with three Oscars (out of seven nominations to date), film festival citations from Jerusalem to Zagreb, and museum anointings. Their films were never block-booked into theaters and their household ledger did not always balance, but the Hubleys became exemplars for an entire up-and-coming generation of non-traditional animated film-makers. The thirty-odd Hubley short films and two features are not only beloved by film enthusiasts, but by generations of schoolchildren, and nowadays they have a healthy "second life" on Disney and Pyramid video (see list following interview).

John Hubley was the senior artist. A noted background painter for Walt Disney on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Pinocchio, Fantasia, Dumbo* and *Bambi,* he left Disney after the bitter strike of 1941 and was among the founders of the alternative United Productions of America, source of Mr. Magoo and of a strong "flat" graphic style featuring parody, serious subject matter, and abstract forms.

John Hubley was a staunch unionist and cultural progressive whose moonlighting included production design for the 1947 staging of Bertolt Brecht's *Galileo* and collaboration with director Joseph Losey on Losey's early films. When the anti-Communist blacklist descended on Hollywood, Hubley suddenly found himself "unemployable," and at a turning-point in his career. The blacklist precipitated his move into animated commercials and, circuitously, into marriage and partnership with Faith Hubley. Their mutual pact to produce at least one short film per year according to their own artistic standards, and to sit down for the evening meal with their children, lasted until his untimely death in 1977.

Since then, Faith Hubley has upheld the legacy, with a little help from her children. Sons Ray and Mark chip in, and Emily and Georgia, apart from working behind-the-scenes on their mother's innumerable projects, have themselves produced a bumper crop of Hubley animation.

An optimist to the core, Faith Hubley has survived much: a Hell's Kitchen childhood; Hollywood and the name-naming; her husband's death; and her own ten-year brush with supposedly terminal disease. In 1986 she produced her first solo feature, *The Cosmic Eye,* in which three be-bop visitors from outer space postulate on the history and future of the human species. Although she four-walled it herself in New York City and Los Angeles, to ecstatic reviews ("enchanting, affecting and exhilarating," wrote Judith Crist; "an ingenious work," reported Michael Wilmington of *The Los Angeles Times,* "seraphically childlike and delightful"), *The Cosmic Eye* is presently without a distributor.

We met, for the first time, at a world peace film festival in Burlington, Vermont; we spoke for several hours, on another occasion, at her Upper East Side apartment/studio in New York City (filled with books, mementoes, Oscars and plaques, paintings by herself and others); and finally, we rendezvoused in Madison, Wisconsin, where daughter Georgia (on drums) and her husband Ira Kaplan (lead guitarist and vocalist) were on the road with their new-wave rock band Yo La Tengo.

•

Faith Hubley, optimist to the core [Photo: Michael Kienitz]

Your official biography says that you were born in New York City and studied theater before coming to Hollywood.

I worked as a stage manager and I studied with the New Theater League at the New School. I studied the Stanislavski Method for years—acting and directing—under Brett Warren and Lem Ward (in New York), and later with Lee J. Cobb, J. Edward Bromberg, Morris Carnovsky and Phoebe Brand in Los Angeles. These were the old Group Theatre people—which brought me full circle, because seeing the Group Theatre, while I was still in high school, is how I became interested in theatre.

While I was still a teenager, in New York City, I did some People's Theater. We put on a play, for example, for the Transport Worker's Union. It was a peace play just before the Soviet Union was attacked (in 1941). I took over the stage managing. June 22 came and we had to close because we could no longer be pacifist. We had to be more historically framed.

Were you studying art at all during this time?

This was when I was only 15 to 18. I had always wanted to be a painter or a musician, but I had to earn a living first.

Did either of your parents paint or draw?

No. My father was a dentist and my mother played the stock market, and in fact the reason I didn't go on to school was because they wanted me to be a dentist. I could only have an education if I would agree to become a dentist.

The reason you didn't go on to college, you mean?

I also didn't finish high school. That's why I started doing theater at 15. I'm a very loyal child and I don't like to talk about my family, but I'll tell you a little bit, so you understand the context.

There was this hilarious pressure for me to become a dentist. For example, I had to pass "Hygiene" in high school but in order to pass you had to have a piece of paper signed by your parents saying your teeth had been cleaned. My father, who was a Russian-Polish immigrant Jew, was my dentist and he wouldn't sign the piece of paper unless I agreed to become a dentist. So I left home and started doing theater at 15.

I got married to a radio announcer. He knew all about music and theater. That's how I got involved in the theater. Because I was a scholarship student, I had a lot of jobs to do, so I really learned how to put on a production. For example, I booked talent for the New Theatre League.

Who did you book them for?

Mostly unions and organizations. I met people like Marc Blitzstein and Earl Robinson, all the people of that time who were so wonderfully talented. I booked Woody Guthrie—Woody was always so vague—he was very grateful to

have a teenaged girl who could tell him where to go and how much to charge. It was very exciting. I learned a lot from booking. I really got to talk to these people and to ask all sorts of questions about their work and that wonderful period of ferment in the theatre.

How did your radical politics and lifestyle spring out of your upbringing?

Through my father—in a negative way. I had joined the American Student Union, as practically anybody with half a brain did, in high school. I was very anti-fascist. My father had all of these tactics in order to get me to be a dentist and at one point he came to the school and told school officials that I was a Communist and a prostitute and I had a bad heart and I never brushed my teeth. It was part of his effort to turn me into a dentist.

I think my parents perceived me as their meal ticket. If only I would become a dentist, I could take over my father's practice and support them in their old age. So they kept turning me in to the FBI. Those kinds of experiences really had a lot to do with my becoming political, because I just had to survive.

As a teenager?

Yeah. We had a peace rally when I was 14, I think. It was in Yorkville, this Nazi neighborhood, with all these crazy German ladies and Nazis screaming, "They're dragging the flag on the ground!" The police were called and arrested us . . . .

You make it sound as if you were very together, politically, for a teenager. Was it partly the era, partly New York City . . . ?

I was a very fortunate child. I had gone to one of the great public schools in Hell's Kitchen and had had wonderful teachers there. Quite good teachers, who really taught us, when we were nine, ten, eleven years old, to think. We were told to read everything and anything we could. We could really weigh everything.

It was just a wonderful school. English was a minority language—mostly French, Italian and Greek were spoken; there were Orientals and blacks; everybody was very poor. I remember that one student was a prostitute. Our teacher said, and I'll remember this until the day I die, "None of you make fun of her. None of you be cruel to her. She had no choice. Her father's an alcoholic, her mother's an alcoholic . . . " I used to walk with her, I was proud to walk with her, and I guess my father saw me doing that and thought I was a prostitute because I was showing solidarity with her.

That's how we were raised at PS 17.

How did your marriage come about?

I decided I had to get married to obtain some legal rights, only I had never had a date in my whole life, and I had barely talked to boys. They had a musical quiz on the air at WNYC where if you knew all the answers or could identify the pieces of music you won a free concert ticket. My prospective husband was the host of the show. Because I was shy, and because I had such a passion for music, I gave the answers to my girlfriend and she was picked out of the audience. He invited her to the ballet and later, when he found out it was me who knew the answers, he took me to the ballet.

If things were normal, we would never have gotten married. Marriage kept him out of the army and it kept me out of jail.

Obviously such a marriage couldn't work because we were too young. I left him and stayed with some friends in the New Theater movement until my father came to get me with the police. I came home from work one day and at the corner of 46th St. and Sixth Avenue, there was my husband at one corner, and there were my father and two cops at the other. The cops said, "Either you go back to this man, or you go back to your father, or you go to jail." I couldn't figure out what I'd done wrong. I said, "What's my crime?"

Your crime was you weren't old enough.

I was a little under 17.

What did you do?

I went back to my parents. My parents, at least, were a familiar torture and it was just a matter of waiting it out until I was 18. I went to business school, earned money in an office, and worked in the theater at night. My father wanted me to get a divorce and take alimony. I was proud, I had a good brain and a good heart, thanks to PS 17, and I said, "I won't take alimony. It's immoral. I won't." So when I was 18, I went to Reno for a divorce.

After you went to Reno, and got your divorce, you kept going?

To Los Angeles. I wanted to be as far away from home as possible. The only people I knew there were Carl Lerner, who was working as a machinist, and his wife Gerdta. This was 1943. I was so ashamed of this failed marriage that I just wanted to serve. My plan was to work in a

defense plant till the war was over. I was going to go to school at night. I got a job at a place called Faith Plating. This is still on Santa Monica Blvd. across the street from Goldwyn. I got fired for being too fast. "Slow down, and don't be so serious," they said. I said, "There's a war against fascism and it is serious. I'm not going to slow down. . . ." They gave me three chances and then they fired me. It was considered a disturbance on the assembly line. Without wishing to make trouble I was a troublemaker.

So I decided to go into the movie business. One could do training films and learn a craft. I got a job as a waitress across the street from Columbia and applied for a job as a messenger. I waited and waited, and got hired.

It was during the war and the boys were all being drafted, so it was just a matter of time before one could get picked for something else and then could move up. It took about five minutes for any smart girl to figure out what jobs were available. The studio was wide open. You could learn budget and organization. They were training actors, like Lloyd Bridges and Larry Parks, who were contract players, as young assistant directors.

Since they might need them as directors because of the war drain?

Possibly. It was a "progressive" studio—because of John Howard Lawson and Sidney Buchman, I guess. I picked Columbia because of Lawson. I knew his book on the theory of the technique of playwrighting, and I felt any studio that would hire him would have to be the best studio. There must be people there who could read and write and think. And Sidney Buchman was vice-president, so, unlike any other studio, they took young people seriously.

Being a messenger at Columbia was like going to film school because you could go any place and you were sort of encouraged to ask questions and move up. For example, as a messenger you delivered the mail to the writers' room, so you could talk to all the writers. We kids knew almost as much about the studio as Harry Cohn.

Did the studio live up to your expectations?

Yes. I would say I had a very good experience at Columbia, except that I wanted to be a music editor and the only department, in editing, that would not consider women, oddly enough, was the music department. It was hard to get into the other editing departments too, but it was possible.

Were you aware of being discriminated against as a female?

Oh sure. You couldn't be a cameraman or a sound person.

How did they put it?

They just said, "You're a girl." (laughs)

Even the progressives?

They were a little more subtle, but same thing. Dede Allen was my roommate and still is my dear friend. We both started out as messengers. Dede and I were trying to get hired in editing and they would say, "No, you can't because you're a girl." We'd say, "Well, why not?" They'd say, "Well, you're not strong enough. . . ." Then we would gain a lot of weight and show them we could lift heavy boxes, and then they would say, "We're not relaxed with you. You don't swear. . . ." then we would practice saying 'fuck' and 'shit,' walking through the studio saying 'fuck shit fuck shit.'. . . and then they would say, "That's no way for a girl to talk."

How did the Hollywood movement differ from the East Coast movement?

What I loved about the East Coast movement was that there was little separation between theory and practice. If you believed in "people's theater," then you acted it out.

In New York we were very engaged in bringing culture to the people. One of the most exciting things was a project we cooked up with the cultural arm of the CIO where we convinced the Metropolitan Museum to do a history of labor for trade union members with parallel slides of what was going on in the history of painting.

In Hollywood, there was a double standard. In Hollywood, you made a lot of money, and then you helped the people. Even Jack Lawson wanted everyone to make a lot of money.

Was that dichotomy clear from the outset?

It was perfectly clear. I made a commitment to myself to work in the studios for four or five years and learn a craft, because I knew that it would take twice or three times as long to do that in New York at that time. I wanted to have a real strong hands-on background. I wanted to be never afraid of machines. I didn't want to be afraid of anybody. In a funny way I wanted to understand the economics, the budget and management of the studios, so that I would never be seduced by Hollywood.

The people I really loved in Hollywood were

the individuals. I loved Ben Hecht because I loved the movies he made, and I loved the fact that he was not two people, he was clearly one person. When I worked at Republic as a music cutter, because they hired women there, I was assigned to work on *Spectre of the Rose,* which was directed by Hecht. I loved George Antheil, a brilliant composer, who wrote all the scores for Hecht's movies. George let me cut stock music to make up the score for the film, then he took what I cut and wrote the score. My youngest daughter is named after George. Through him and his wife I met most of the refugees from the European community in Hollywood—Isherwood, Auden, Stravinsky, and so on.

How long did your progression up through the ranks at Columbia last?

A couple of years. I got real pissed when I found out I couldn't be a music cutter. Because I could read music, I could read and write music, and most of their music cutters were musically illiterate. When I came to a dead end (at Columbia) I went to Goldwyn, then to Republic and a couple of other studios, then I came back to Columbia.

When you went back to Columbia, did they allow you to cut music?

No. I was a script clerk, working script on Westerns and "Blondies" and the Three Stooges. I seldom worked on anything I didn't really love.

You loved the Three Stooges?

I thought it was very important training. Watching them improvise. And they weren't dumb. I tell you, that's something—to do continuity for the Three Stooges when nobody knew what they were going to do next, including them. They were fearless and funny and they cracked me up.

During all this time in Hollywood, were you doing any painting?

Yes. I took a number of courses at the People's Educational Center. I also took screenwriting from Edward Dmytryk, directing from Vincent Sherman, and a class with John Howard Lawson on the history of the American democratic tradition, based on the Parrington book [*Main Currents in American Thought*].

The screenwriting course was about the establishment of the status quo, the breaking of the status quo, and about how you resolve the breaking of the status quo on a higher level (laughs). This went on for twelve weeks. Quel rip-off! But we took those courses in part because of the gossip. These were the guys working the creative jobs in the studios and it was a way for us to find out what was going on. And occasionally we learned something.

This is an example of how the movement was in California; I taught a class in Marxism! I taught a class in my living room to elderly people from the Fairfax neighborhood. I thought they were elderly; they were probably not as old as I am now. They would come and pay attention and listen and say, "Oh, yes, uh-huh. . . ." This went on for about eight weeks, at the end of which they gave me a bottle of perfume—the only bottle of perfume anyone had ever bought me, up to that point. Their spokesperson said, "Darling, we didn't understand a word. We only speak Yiddish. But you're so nice. Every week you came, every week you talked to us. . . ." (laughs)

My painting teacher (whose name I can't remember) looked at my work and told me I was a mixture of Persian miniatures and Milton Avery. I thought I had died and gone to heaven. I said, "Do you think I can paint?" She said, "Of course you can." She was wonderful. She persuaded me to take six months off out of the year, starting in 1945, and receive unemployment while free-lancing, and to use the rest of the time to paint and write and grow. That was my education. I was a young person and I didn't need that much money. I was making a lot of money anyway, most of which I gave away, and not necessarily to the movement. To anybody who needed it.

Besides showing modern art, Clara Grossman's gallery also had the dandy film society (in Hollywood), the only film society which showed the classic films. The greats would come! Carl and Dede and I took over Clara's film society and we did a Russian series, a French series, and an American series. For the American series Irving Lerner was our mentor, so we found all the old docs of the 1930s, the independent films of Frontier Films. And we showed some Hollywood classics, like *Our Daily Bread.* We had eight hundred subscriptions.

How and where did you meet John?

I met John in Hollywood during this period, when he was in the Army. People used to say that we had the same smile and that we were apt to make the same jokes in different places. He was walking down Hollywood Boulevard one

day, with Sy Wexler, who made educational films in Hollywood during and after the war.

There was Johnny, with his big teeth. I guess everybody has the same number of teeth but his teeth seemed to jump out from his face. Then I saw his uniform, only it didn't look like a uniform, it was buttoned wrong, very creased. I walked up to Sy and said, "That's John Hubley, isn't it?" He said yes and we were introduced.

We became friends and we were friends for a long, long time before we were married. We stayed in touch and were involved in projects together. For a while we were trying to do some documentary together, with Ben Maddow, called *The American Crime,* I think. It was about lynching and civil rights, but we never made it. That was typical of Hollywood, even with the good folk. Endless dreams!

Were you beginning to think about animation?

I had seen Johnny's stuff at UPA and I thought in my heart of hearts, while never articulating it, since I knew I was meant to be a painter and I loved the cinema, how lucky he was to be in this art form that was eclectic. I thought, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to make something out of that art form, something more than meets the eye?"

Did you have a model for your thinking, at all?

No. But in our film society we showed the work of Georges Méliès, which I don't really like, but I like the idea of it because it is fantastical. I loved the avant-garde in France. I always loved surrealism and the experimental film-makers, because that is what we showed in Clara's gallery. There was a film we showed called *Menilmontant* [1926]. I loved this film. I can't tell you why. It was a surreal film, a lot of action, full of canals and steps, by Dimitri Kirsanov, a Russian emigré director. It was pretty close to a personal vision. (laughs) I just knew that someday I would direct films and it didn't matter to me whether they were drawn or photographed. I still don't like that division. I just knew I was looking for a medium that would express what I was feeling inside. Don't we all? I knew it would be in film, it wouldn't be at the studios because they were not set up for art, and I knew I'd have to be patient and work at it, and eventually it would happen.

At the time you met Johnny, he was gone from Disney, right?

Gone from Disney, not necessarily forever. I'm not a specialist on this, but I believe they were told they could come back after the strike, but they didn't want to afterwards. By then they had finer things in their brains. At this time, Irving Lerner, who was a pal, had gotten this project to direct: a sex education film for junior high school kids. Eddie Albert was the producer and UPA did the animation of the menstrual cycle.

Eddie Albert the actor? He was a progressive?

As you gather, I have a hard time putting people in boxes. After the war, Eddie Albert thought Hollywood was dreadful and he wanted to spend the rest of his life trying to do something useful. He wanted to make educational films, so he got the money to do this film. Irving was to be the director.

It was a struggle to make that film. We were so broke at one point that I had to hand code the whole film with a bottle of white ink. We worked like dogs on the boring live-action. Johnny did the animation with UPA. He created this luminous body that looked like a Georgia O'Keefe painting—it was beautiful.

It was a very successful film. It is the only documentary I know of that had to be remade because the clothing styles changed—so they reshot it fifteen years later. It was a historic film.

At the end of this period, in 1947, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) descended, and I gather that you and Johnny were both blacklisted.

Johnny was, I wasn't. His being blacklisted was just proof positive of how absurd the whole thing was.

How did Johnny find out that he was no longer employable?

I'll tell you what little I know. Johnny had to leave UPA but I know he could have done a payoff at some point and continued to work for Columbia. Only he didn't. For one thing, it was too much money. A lot of people were offered payoffs, and some could afford it, some couldn't and some just said no. So Johnny was, as he put it, "on the lam."

What was your situation?

I was free-lancing. I had two goals: I wanted to edit one picture before I left California and I got to edit Irving's picture. And I wanted to be a script clerk on one really expensive Holly-

wood movie with a lot of people and a lot of management. So through the union I got this job on this film called *Heaven Only Knows,* a two-million-dollar picture which was at the time considered very expensive.

It was a Western with special effects, Brian Donlevy, Robert Cummings and a cast of thousands. When I finished with that job, it was time for me to do something else in life. I was still booking the next film series, which was the most important part of my life other than painting. But I hadn't clearly decided to leave Hollywood. I went back East for a vacation, and then I decided not to go back to Los Angeles because I just didn't feel like it. I was given to quixotic whims.

Did your decision have anything to do with the blacklist?

Maybe. New York was fun.

Had the blacklist descended? Was this before the October, 1947 hearings?

It was on the cusp. I remember going down to Washington and helping friends in New York. I just wanted to work in New York. And mostly I wanted to go to Europe. I also wanted to work on a serious, heavy documentary and I became Leo Hurwitz's assistant on *Strange Victory.* It's an interesting film, about how the War victory wasn't really a victory.

Did you finally go to Europe?

After I finished my work on *Strange Victory* I went to Paris and then to this international Conference of Working Youth in Poland. The first thing that happened when we got to Poland was we all had to march through Warsaw, then we went to this church where, amidst all these rococo angels, a priest gave his blessing to the international youth! (laughs) This conference was amazing. I will never forget it. It changed my life. Grew me up.

At this conference we got to meet working youth from all over the whole wide world. We learned there was such a place as Vietnam! There were children who were working in the mines whom we could talk to about their working conditions.

Then I had made this promise to myself way back in the messenger room of Columbia that, because I was a lucky girl who grew up in Hollywood, I owed the world something. I had pledged to work on a reconstruction brigade one day. And at the end of this conference, they asked, "Does anybody want to work on a railroad in Czechoslovakia?" and I raised my hand.

Really? For how long?

We dug trenches and we laid railroad ties—for three weeks. I got a medal for bravery! (laughs)

Because the average age, for girls on this international brigade, might have been 17, I felt very maternal. We were working in a valley surrounded by huge hills. I saw this boulder coming down the mountain toward the trenches and there was no stopping it and not enough time to jump out of the way. I saw this young girl who was going to get hit by the boulder, and I threw her aside and put my body between her and the boulder. I got hit and I still have the scar. [She shows the scar.] After they cleaned up the blood we sang anthems, they gave me flowers, and awarded me a medal.

Then you came back to New York?

No, no, no. I went to Prague. Later when I was running out of money, I went to Rome, contracted meningitis and nearly died, spent four months in a clinic and nearly lost my vision. Afterwards I bopped around Italy with a friend of mine. Wrote a screenplay about the Mafia with Basilio Franchina, a director I met. Went to a lot of movies, met a lot of people. I had the best time.

Was this the first writing you had done?

Yes. Because these near-death experiences made me feel as though life was not forever. Then I went to a Peace Congress in Paris and spent four months in Paris (at the Cinémathèque Française) as part of what I consider my homemade education, looking at movies and reading books.

My mother cabled me that I had a job waiting for me back in New York on a feature that was going to be shot. The director, Bernard Vorhaus, was blacklisted. So I came home and worked on Bernie's picture about delinquent girls, *So Young, So Bad,* with Anne Francis, Anne Wallach, Rita Moreno and Paul Henreid. I script-clerked it, in short order I became an assistant cutter, and before long I was editing a feature called *Go, Man, Go,* about the Harlem Globetrotters, directed by Jimmy Wong Howe.

Where was Johnny all this time?

In Hollywood. What he did as a solution to the blacklist was to set up a commercial company, Storyboard, and he started making a lot of money doing commercials. He had a front man, but he was making it big. The front was

getting the business and signing the contracts. But everybody in town knew it was Johnny doing the commercials. They were good commercials by the way—among other things, it was Johnny who brought jazz to commercials.

Ah, so he was the big jazz enthusiast.

Well, I was a jazz enthusiast too. Anyway, he had started to gain as much weight as he was making money—

Why?

Why do people over-eat? Probably because he was unhappy. He was buying expensive clothes and he looked like hell. Here was this really good-looking, wonderful-looking man—now he was fat and overdressed and drinking too much and miserable. I started writing him letters telling him he needed to get out and move to New York.

Then Johnny was hired by Yip Harburg to do *Finian's Rainbow* as an animated feature. But Johnny was a fella who was famous for never being on budget, and certainly never being on schedule. So Yip, whom I knew from my youth in Hollywood, asked me if I would be Johnny's assistant in Los Angeles.

I said I had to think about it and asked if he had talked to Johnny. He said, "No, but everybody knows Johnny loves you and you love Johnny." I said, "That's different. That's friendship. You have to ask him." So Johnny was in New York doing something on *Finian's* and we met. He said he wasn't sure I should come to Los Angeles because we both knew that we had controlled our friendship for ten years and after all he was a married man with three kids. But we decided I would take the job and so I went to Los Angeles again.

Then the picture blew up. All the preparations were done, the storyboarding was done, the score was recorded, the animation was in progress; we went out to lunch one day and came back and there was a padlock on the door. That was it. The official word was the blacklist. They said it was because of Johnny. But I think it had something to do with some power struggle among the backers of *Finian's*. . .

How far along was the film?

The sound track and all the dialogue were finished—it had Frank Sinatra singing "Necessity" and "Old Devil Moon" and Ella Fitzgerald and beautiful Louie Armstrong, all kinds of great people, doing jazz versions of the songs. There are bootleg records of this track.

I am surprised someone like Frank Sinatra was willing to work with you, even though he must have known that Johnny was blacklisted.

Oh, Frank was always okay.

Lionel Stander once told me Sinatra was the only actor he knew who not only read Marx, but could comprehend it.

Frank was and still is partly wonderful. I know the things that he does for people and it's not all sentiment. He is trapped; he made a mistake with the Mafia and I don't think he had any choice after that; he was naive and he was captured by the Establishment.

But if we talk about politics in a profound way, I think Frank lived out his politics. One can get shot for saying this, but Frank practices a lot that is decent, and never mind who he endorses, politically, because he has no damn choice. There isn't a jazz musician in need in this country who hasn't been helped by him.

So . . . after Finian's*?*

Then we went off to Europe on a trial marriage. We thought we should travel together first. And we fought and fought and fought, but we did find out there is such a thing as a middle road, so we decided we were going to get married. Johnny went off to get his divorce, which was hard, but he did. This was 1955. Johnny opened up a New York office of Storyboard and soon after sold the Los Angeles one.

That seems like quite a leap.

At the time it seemed simple. I didn't know all about doubt and uncertainty; all I knew was that this was the luckiest moment in my life, and that one could influence the outcome of one's life if one was clear about what one wanted to do. When you're so in love, anything seemed possible. I'm sure it was different for Johnny—he's not here to tell his side of the story—and I do know he was crushed by *Finian's* exploding.

Everything seems a greater leap for him, greater than for you, since you had always been more on the fringe.

I've got to stop talking about Johnny, because he isn't here to talk for himself, and the anniversary of his death is coming up, and if I don't stop I'll start to cry.

His grandfather was a painter from England, and everybody laughed at his grandfather because he didn't make his money brewing beer like other members of the family. He was a beautiful spirit, the oddball, and he gave

Johnny his brushes and easels. Clearly Johnny loved this man and his love for him was like a sustaining force.

Johnny never finished art school because the Disney seducers came around and offered him money and training. But he was always open. He always knew there was more to life than Disney and being clever in Hollywood, and he had a very profound feeling about art and literature and music. He always thought there was something beyond, something around the corner, that he was missing.

But wasn't it your influence, initially, that pulled him in such a radical direction?

It's broader than that. I think moving to New York was the big question. Moving out of the small industry town to where there is an intellectual and social life in the true sense of the word. I think if you look at Johnny's evolution as a human being, his coming to New York, where he led a pretty isolated life as a pioneer in his chosen art form, allowed him to revive his goals. There *was* a pull. But for him to leave his whole past life and move to New York, where, in the beginning, he felt a lot like a country yokel, was very courageous.

Now, it was never total, he needed support and a lot of push, but I don't want to underestimate what he brought to it in the beginning, because from the beginning he was adventurous. He was a Renaissance person and always hungry.

How did you envision your partnership at the outset?

When Johnny and I got married, and we wrote our wedding vows, the agreement stated that we would make one short film a year, and eat with our children. We would really try to have a family, meaning, we would eat at home and share and be regular human beings, which is not the way people in Hollywood raise their families.

How did you finance your early avant-garde animation?

To begin with, Johnny had a commission on the way from the Guggenheim, to make *Adventures of an Asterisk,* a film about a child's vision. We had just had a new baby and we tried hard to capture all that intensity in this film. The film turned out to be a visual experience about the vision of a little child, which is so pure and so wonderful, about how what is perceived by those eyes for the first time is tactile and felt, and about how that pure vision, as the child slowly grows in society, is made to follow certain rules.

For us, on a personal level, it was like starting over, because we were a new couple, newly partners, with this new baby—

It was a metaphor for your own careers.

Exactly. I've never enjoyed anything as much, and that enjoyment, that new release of energy, was sustained for five or ten years.

Were there other grants and commissions over the years?

Johnny and I never got a grant in our whole married life. Not one. *Moonbird,* for example, we financed ourselves and it took about 25 years to pay off and only now is it making a little bit of money. There were some commissions certainly, but they would not be vast sums of money, not like in advertising, but it was money. And if UNICEF commissions one to make a film about how hunger affects the world's children, that's like performing your social obligation, and getting paid for it.

I gather you have always done a little moonlighting.

In the beginning, I continued to work in live action for financial reasons, working on *Twelve Angry Men* and other movies, and also to give Johnny a little breathing space. Johnny kept up his commercial activity in New York and I hated advertising and I still do with such a passion. I would've thrown those people out of my office.

Then along came Markie Maypo, which was different. (laughs) Are you old enough to remember Markie Maypo?

It rings a bell.

This was an amazing advertising phenomenon. Maypo was a cereal made by a little company in Vermont which was bought by a liquor company, Heublein, to offset their profits. The company wanted to do a commercial that was a non-commercial. So we did a commercial about this little boy wearing a cowboy hat who hated the cereal and goes "Yuck!" and his father has to force-feed him—"Here comes the aeroplane!" We named him Markie, after our son, who did the voice. It was a little one-minute documentary on feeding a child. And it took off, though it wasn't supposed to. It was supposed to NOT sell the product. We got paid a lot of money, and were able to finance at least half of *Moonbird.* We lived from film to film like that for a very long time, until we began

work on a feature (*Of Stars and Men*) on which we ended up owing an awful lot of money.

It seems to me that when you and John were working together, ironically, you had more of an upper hand when it came to actually choosing the subject matter. In the sense that, given his background as a more traditional and commercial animator, the films you began to work on seemed to spring more out of your sensibility. Privately, it seems, you were very, if not dominant, at least very assertive in terms of what you were doing together, and that's one of the things that kept John on track.

I think I have a natural ability to enthuse. It's genuine, I have to believe in what I'm doing, and when I have that enthusiasm, it's irresistible. So I think that's what happened, although being flexible, we couldn't work around a theme until we found that part of the theme that Johnny felt good about, and that's what made the collaboration very strong.

Why were you, and are you, so opposed to a narrative form?

For my taste, I think the obligation of animation is to deal with material that live action can't, and to look for that form and content which is beyond an actor, which is beyond the adaptation of even a very fine book.

Was it easier to be abstract, than to be linear, to go from A to B to C to D?

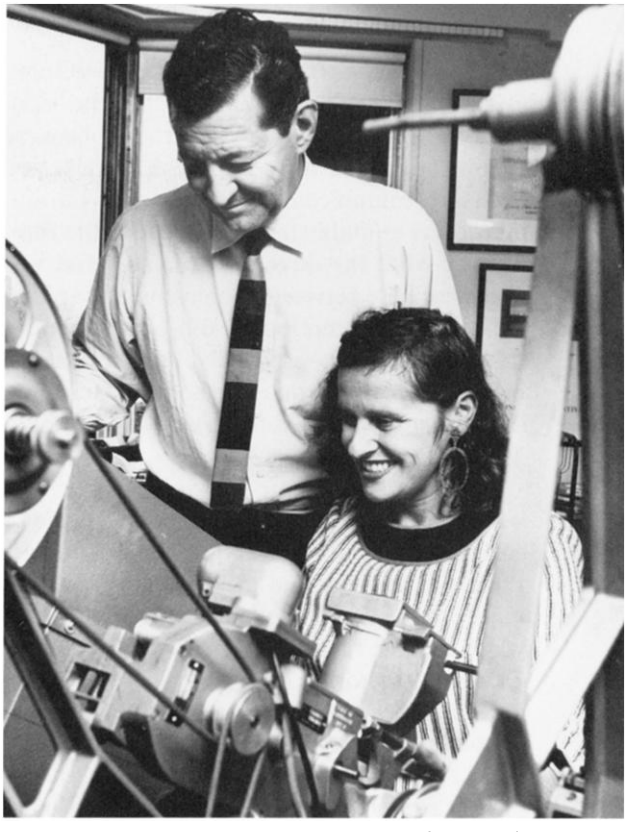
It was easier because a lot of it was free association. But if a film took us a year to make, six months of that time we spent working from the interior out.

How did your collaboration work, in terms of the initial writing?

It just evolved very naturally. We would discuss the structure, then we would each do a draft. The rule of the game was that if there was anything that either of us were violently opposed to it, it was just out the window. You could fight for something you really loved a lot, but if the other person really hated it, you had to give it up. After a while there would be something like three or four pieces of tape on a roll with John's name or my name, pieces that we had given up that we really hadn't given up in our heart of hearts, hoping that when the whole thing was put together, maybe the other person would change their mind.

How much of what we see in the joint Hubley films are your own drawings?

Hard to say. Less than half. We would get



John and Faith Hubley at the Moviola

the visual expression together, even if a lot of it was done in the privacy of our boudoir, then Johnny would usually do the amalgam. Especially in the films that deal with children or were about being a mother—I knew how certain things should look—but Johnny knew animation. Having had all the Stanislavski training, I also had really strong feeling for how the characters should act, in some cases. Because it was not just drawing, it was character analysis, writing with the characters.

The story and the storyboard, how the picture looked, were joint. It was a two-people vision. Even though Johnny was a better artist and certainly had all this experience, I was like a primitive working with somebody who was very trained. There were great advantages.

There wasn't anything in the picture we didn't discuss together, but there was a conflict between the public and private image. The private image was fine. Working together was no problem; we could argue yet have a healthy, strong collaboration. Whereas the public image was more Johnny. Johnny would do the public end, the handing out of the work to other people, till we got back to the editing at the end. That coincided with my training in live action

because I had worked with a lot of directors.

The meeting with the animator, and the handout of the animation, is very crucial, because even though you have all the drawings, you need to communicate the timings, and the animator has to understand the spirit of the film. That is what the director explains. That was always private between Johnny and the animator, with the exception of Bill Littlejohn, because sometimes, especially on *Carousel,* I wanted to act out some of the characters.

I gather Johnny was always doctoring your scenes.

Yes, which made me feel very inferior. He was the senior artist and he was ten years older. The turning point for me was *Carousel* because I was sick by then and there were certain passages that I painted, really in my own hand, and which (for the first time) Johnny didn't change. Or didn't doctor.

You were sometimes treated like a pupil. On the other hand, what a good school to be going to!

That's right. On balance, it was all okay. The big question was sharing the directing credit which happened for the first time on *Cockaboody* [in 1973]. It was the first time I ever got a co-credit, a co-directing credit, which was very upsetting to him. It was difficult for Johnny to share as much as he had to. Later on, of course, Johnny began to change of his own accord.

Is there a way you can generalize for me the Hubley technique and approach, in animation, as opposed to the more traditional ways and means?

This is a good chance to say something that has to be said: Johnny was not an animator. Johnny was a designer-director. For years, we were scrupulous about saying, "No, we don't animate." An animator draws meticulously, and makes this magic of things moving and turning and taking shape. Bill Littlejohn animates, or Shamus Culhane animates. We design and are film-makers.

You should explain the difference to me.

There isn't a word for an animated filmmaker, but they're really two things. There's animation, the craft, and there's animation, making the whole film. In the Disney studios the craft people were the animators. Disney knew exactly what he was doing when he emphasized the craft separation so that nobody would have the film-making power; that's not only a political observation, it's an artistic one. People who did animation would start at Disney as little apprentices and spend fifteen years learning to do "in betweens" and if they lived long enough or were lucky enough to become animators, they would think they were on a pinnacle. Johnny, at Disney, was a background painter and a layout artist.

For the uninitiate, what is layout as opposed to background?

Layout is like staging a scene, designing how the scene is going to move, the action. But the layout person would probably have nothing to do with the sound, for example, he would just take the drawings from the storyboard artist and say, "How does this scene work?" It's like being a second-unit director. It's not conceptual.

So Walt Disney was really the film-maker.

Absolutely. And he didn't allow other people to make films, and that's really what the strike [in mid-1941] was about, I think, about money and conditions and the control of the films. To these young men Disney was king, a god, and they had to kill the king in order to make artists of themselves. It was amazing to me, because I remember after old Walt died, I couldn't believe my husband and [director of Famous Studios] Bill Tytla were sitting around watching television talking about Disney with tears in their eyes. And I thought, "I thought this was the enemy!"

How would you generalize about the differences between the Disney style of animation and the technology and the technique that you pioneered on a small scale?

The big change was that we figured out how to make films in a very small space. It's as simple as that. Personal films that required half a dozen people.

From a technical point of view, since John didn't have to deal with the studio, he didn't have to use conventional ways, so we could do anything we wanted to do. Anything! We explored reticulation and paper as a medium, and it was the beginning of eliminating the hard-cel and the hard-line that I've always felt was ugly.

And cel-animation is, was, inhibiting. One would have to have a certain kind of skill to do it as handmade mass production. I'm not a specialist in it; I just know I hate it—I hate the way it looks and I don't like the feel of it. I hate the

hard edge and I don't see why anyone should learn to be tidy. I am a bit of a slob and I like a free-flowing line and texture. That was our contribution—aside from content and the amazing changes in sound, using children, using jazz and wonderful composers, using improvisation—to liberate animation from itself, and to go to watercolors and to paint pastels. It was a big, big liberation and resisted by the industry.

Your sources for films—from Harlow Shapley to Erik H. Erikson—are so, for want of a better word, esoteric. Is there any way you can generalize for me where you sought and derived your intellectual inspiration?

Remember, we had this ten-year friendship, followed by a very brief and intense courtship. The floodgates opened during the courtship and we discovered we both always had this feeling about science. You know, for example, that Johnny always wanted to do the story about Galileo's life. He did the stage design for the Los Angeles production [directed by Losey], and helped block the scenes.

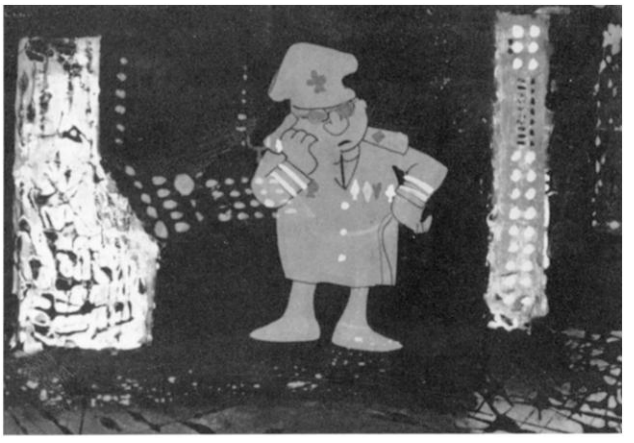
It was like being kids again and we started asking each other what we really wanted to do in life. A lot of what we really wanted to do revolved around taking the ideas that were new, the emerging visions of the planet, which were being presented to the public in very technical jargon, almost in another language, a high-priest form—and to break down the gulf between insiders and outsiders. It was a shared obsession. We wanted to be that bridge. I think we had very hungry minds.

One of the things that strikes me about your films is their relationship to jazz. They are very sensory and you can let them wash over you and really enjoy them, and sometimes feel *more than* know *something about what they are trying to tell you.*

They're physical, almost like a good massage.

And of course some of them have such fabulous jazz sound tracks. I want to ask you about the jazz people—like Benny Carter and Dizzy Gillespie. When and where did you meet them? You've had such a long collaboration with both of them.

Bennie I met independently of Johnny the first year I was in Hollywood. We were trying to raise money for an inter-racial hospital, and this classical pianist named Lucille asked me if



THE HOLE (1962)

I would go backstage with her to ask Benny Carter for some money. I said, "Of course!" Because growing up in Hell's Kitchen, where there was a lot of jazz in the street, there was nothing more beautiful to me than a horn player.

When Johnny and I did our first film, *Adventures of an Asterisk,* there was no question that Benny would do the score. In fact at one point we wrote a feature called *Jazz Beat,* about the history of American jazz—a love story with two abstract characters. Benny was the musical consultant. But we never made it because we couldn't raise the money.

At one point, when we first got married and had these explosions of feelings, we did a film called *Date with Dizzy,* which is a live action film, a satire on advertising. That was one of the first times we worked with Dizzy. It had live action and some animation. We shot it in one day and we had so much fun. An advertising agency paid for it. I'll never know why. It's an underground treasure, a record of Dizzy in 1957.

I gather you and Johnny were both profoundly influenced by the leading art of your generation, that is, by the surrealists and the modernists, the leading French painters.

Picasso, very strongly, for Johnny. For me, more Paul Klee and Miro. For me, I was influenced by the side of them which is primitive and childlike and by how they allowed that to stay a part of their sophisticated vision. I like the directness and the passion of a child's vision.

You see, Johnny, in his heart of hearts, was a surrealist. John's humor and his interior were totally surreal. So once he perceived that life was getting short, that there wasn't much time left, the surrealism became dominant, or he

wouldn't have survived. It was a joy for him to let go of "boy meets girl" and all of the rules of the game.

What was difficult, because there were difficulties, was in making a film like *Stars and Men* [in 1961], which I still think is a beautiful film, finishing it and putting everything we had in the whole wide world into it, borrowing the money to finish it, having critical acclaim from Bosley Crowther of *The New York Times,* and then no distributor. Then, Johnny would say, "I don't want to be an educator. I want to be seen."

Why did you feel the need to take the financial and creative risk of a feature?

Johnny always wanted to handle a longer length. And we wanted to do something that related to the marriage of science and art. Then we read this book by Harlow Shapley, *Of Stars and Men,* which was an overview of evolution. Dr. Shapley thought the next stage of evolution was psychic and that we had to start preparing for it. The first thing we had to do was stop destroying the planet and get rid of weapons, then we really had to work on a new development, and he went through a kind of history of western science to make that statement.

Of Stars and Men was a wonderful film. It played for all of a week in New York and then totally disappeared. We ended up owing all this money which we eventually paid off, but it left Johnny with a sense of incompletion, because I think he really wanted it to succeed.

That haunted him. As time went by there were more debts and there were more children. There was a middle period of work, including *Tijuana Brass,* which won the Academy Award, which is not our best work. It was commissioned by Herb Alpert and his partners, and they're lovely people. But the film represented, artistically, the compromise of those years.

Was Johnny giving voice to this compromise? Was it a struggle between you, behind the scenes, or was it inarticulate?

It was half and half. I know it was something we used to talk about. It coincided with a period where we had a policy not to do commercials, and we were doing a lot of stuff for Children's Television Workshop, Electric Company and Sesame Street, which was like a refined form of one-minute commercials, selling education to children. But it's not work from the heart and I think if you do a lot of it, it corrodes the eyes. There were some nice films during this period, like *Eggs,* but generally there was a lot of effort to launch features.

For example, we tried to do *Gulliver's Travels* with [poet-documentarist-screenwriter] Ben Maddow. Johnny and Ben were best friends.

Yet this was after it became known that Ben Maddow had cooperated with HUAC. Wasn't that awkward or painful, considering that John himself had been blacklisted?

No, the painful part is what Ben did. I always find this discussion very interesting because I don't believe in permanent guilt. There's some people I'll never talk to because I don't really like them. But I feel some people were victims, they were weak and they became victims, and I believe they punish themselves enough, so I don't have to punish them.

When I worked on *Twelve Angry Men* as script clerk, I would be on the set with Lee J. Cobb. Now, I had been at Cobb's studio as a student, and we had a very close relationship; I babysat for him when he went in the Army and stayed with his wife, Helen. And on the set Lee would look at me and burst into tears and say, "How could you sit there looking at me? Who ever thought that I would be this disgusting person and you would be watching me?" So [director] Sidney Lumet and Henry Fonda would say, "Take that script and go hide!" There was no pleasure in that.

I didn't hate Lee. Later on, I went to see him backstage in New York in *King Lear* and I'm glad I did because he died shortly thereafter. I told him he gave a wonderful performance and he said, "You can't think I am wonderful. How can you? I am nothing. I am disgusting." I said, "Look, that was twenty years ago. . . ."

In Ben's case the blacklist probably came up, but I don't think we talked about it, and if we did start to talk about it, the subject was changed. Somehow, the idea of working together had come up and at the time it seemed pleasurable.

Perhaps it is easier for you to forgive the excesses of the blacklist because you left Hollywood behind, and you have said to me that you were not really blacklisted, per se. Whereas, Johnny was.

And Johnny had a sense of loss about it. On the other hand, and I know this sounds totally irreverent, but I think Johnny's life was made by the blacklist. I really believe that. It was very

harmful to him of course but in a practical way it got him out of being a successful director in the studio system to being an independent, and I don't think that would have happened otherwise.

Watership Down *was another stab at a commercial animated feature. I know that sometime during the latter stages of production, John was relieved, in some fashion, as director. I am puzzled by the name of Martin Rosen, someone I have never heard of as an animator, who is credited as director.*

At one time he was our agent.

He's not an animator?

No. He asked us if we'd do *Watership Down* with himself as producer. I read the book and I didn't like it and said I wouldn't do it. Johnny said he liked the book—I think he genuinely liked it—and this was his chance to do a picture and get paid very well. It was a bonafide offer, but it meant giving up his independence.

Martin came to see me. By this time I was a terminal cancer patient and I had all the freedom that you think you have when you're going to die soon. I said, with some rancor, "This doesn't interest me." He said, "Would Johnny do it without you?" and I said, "Ask him." It was a hard time for everybody, we had family discussions about it, and finally I said, "Johnny, you held out all these years, you've been a good pop, a good partner, and if you really feel this is what you want to do, you have a right to do it." He took the job and went to live in London. I ran the studio, and he would come back at intervals, and stay for a week or two and help out.

Johnny was trying to live in both worlds, and I don't know, maybe it can be done, but he got sicker and sicker while he was commuting, and then he had a minor heart attack. I think *Watership Down* was ready to be mixed when I came over for a week of vacation and we went to Norway.

He was getting sicker and you had been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Right. What a romantic couple! When that vacation was over, I flew to Venice, where we had spent many, many happy summers, where John was going to meet me and the two girls for one last weekend before going home, and he called up from London and told us he had been fired. For a person of Johnny's mentality, a kind of perfectionist, a golden boy, being fired was devastating.

EVERYBODY RIDES THE CAROUSEL (1976)

What was the creative basis of the dispute?

It had nothing to do with creativity.

You told me that, previous to Watership Down, *there was a final period of working together which ended with an artistic flourish.*

It started with *Eggs,* when Johnny's spirit was returning, and for my taste it continued with *Voyage to Next,* the last short film we made together. By then I was sick and there was the major work, *Everybody Rides a Carousel* [in 1976]. It was commissioned by CBS during a period when they must have been under some pressure to do something decent for families and especially for children and it is based on Eric Erikson's life cycle and *Childhood in Society.* It was just before *Watership Down,* it's 72 minutes long, and it's wonderful! . . . though it wasn't a theatrical film, and it did have educational overtones.

I can remember when we finished it and we took it to Cape Cod where Erik and Joan Erikson lived for a showing at a lovely little theater. The last stage of the film is about the old age of wisdom, and we ended the film with the metaphor of a merry-go-round, this carousel, with the last horse going off into the fields to die. I had practiced learning death, or befriending death, and I remember sitting next to Johnny and starting to cry at the end because it was like I was saying goodbye to everybody. It was so ironic, in a way, that Johnny died, and I was supposed to die, and didn't.

You and John had actually started work on The Cosmic Eye, *am I right?*

We had started a project with Carl Sagan which I later turned into *The Cosmic Eye.* If we had gotten the money for *The Cosmic Concert,*

as we were calling it then, we would not have done *The Doonesbury Special. Doonesbury* was the backup if *Cosmic Concert* didn't get financed. But if we had done *Cosmic Concert,* John was going to let me do one, maybe two sequences of my own as part of what he called my "witch act"—because he didn't go along with all this mythology.

And spirituality and metaphysicality.

He thought it was interesting and privately he would say to Bill Littlejohn that she has something none of us know about, and we should let her go with it. So Johnny and I signed the contract for *Doonesbury.* We did the storyboard, Garry Trudeau wrote the script, we recorded the tracks and then we took a vacation. After which, Johnny went into the hospital for this so-called simple bypass, and never came out. He hemmorhaged and died on the table.

Can I ask you about your own illness? I understand you were diagnosed with terminal cancer over ten years ago.

In 1974 the first lumps were found. I was teaching the storyboard class with Johnny at Yale, preparing *Voyage to Next.* I'm not going to say cancer is fun, it isn't. But it has been an opportunity for growth. On occasion, I would have my sessions with students in the chemotherapist's waiting room, which in a way was wonderful for them because, especially in the 70s, cancer wasn't talked about. The students would practice telling their storyboards to the other patients so that in a sense they were practicing performing and getting other people's input. I could almost see the room change from a funeral parlor to a place with a real life force.

I had a mastectomy and the initial assumption was everything was going to be fine. Then after the operation my doctor said, "I think you should have radiation." Then after I had radiation I went in for a check-up and he said, "I don't like your lymph count. It's terrible. Take a deep breath, because I think you have to start preparing to die. I would give you, if I were being generous, a year, and if I wasn't being generous, six months."

So for a while I was just living six months at a time. A lump was found in the remaining breast and my doctor's partner told me he was going to book me a hospital room to have my other breast taken off. And I said no. I felt it was just stress-connected and that I was too mixed up about everything in life and that what I really needed was a rest. So I rented a cabin in Maine and went away for a month in the summertime, leaving Johnny with the children. When I came back, the lump was gone. I changed my eating habits a lot, I had this very strong Italian chemotherapy program, and I kept growing more lumps, which I kept making go away or they would turn out to be benign.

Up until Johnny's death I was still in and out of the hospital, with these lumps coming and going. The last time I was in the hospital was '77. After that I just went back every six months for check-ups. After about ten years I took myself off the list of the doomed. I'm just now beginning to think I'll live. It's only in the last year that I have decided to plan for old age.

How did John's death and being diagnosed with terminal cancer influence what you began to do as a film-maker, individually, without John?

There's something about accepting mortality that gives one courage. It certainly stood me up straight.

Finishing *Doonesbury* without John was honestly the hardest thing I've ever had to do in my whole life. I had to deliver one sequence at a time to NBC and go through censors and committees, and all the time suffering from cancer. They were trying to fire me because I was a mere woman. Garry [Trudeau] was very, very supportive. It was just a horrendous period.

But to be serious, I felt I had no choice. I could not afford to be unafraid. I could not threaten to commit suicide, because I was already dying. Every neurotic behavior pattern was just cut off.

How did facing death affect your subsequent choice of material?

I always felt that every film had to make a statement, a serious statement, but now I felt I could waste no time. I felt very guilty about not finishing *Cosmic Concert* after Johnny died. But I didn't want to give up the idea entirely because I still wanted to do a long piece that was a continuation of *Of Stars and Men* about how creatures from another another planet must view us.

In time I finished *Whither Weather,* a film about the effects of weather on our planet. Then the Year of the Child inspired *Step by Step,* which dealt with the history of child abuse, the condition of the earth's children, and

what their yet-to-be-gained rights are. After *The Big Bang and Other Creation Myths* and *Sky Dance* I began to see how I could shape these elements into a feature film. I planned *Hello* as a short which would work as the climax and in this roundabout fashion, after eight years, I completed *The Cosmic Eye.*

Has it been a problem, distributing as well as financing your films?

Most of the time. It has been up and down, down and up, up and down.

Would they be ever shown with Hollywood movies?

In the past, rarely. *Windy Day* played with *The Odd Couple,* I think. *Of Men and Demons* played with something, but I don't remember what. My film *Hello* played with Tavernier's *Sunday in the Country* at the Paris Theater, and that was nice, although I received no fee. Since then, promises, but no distribution.

Isn't that discouraging?

No, I swear I don't care.

Isn't that a paradox? To make movies that are about things which people should become aware of, or think about, or become concerned about, but the films do not reach them.

It's a paradox. But, how much can you do? I know a lot of film-makers, and Johnny used to be one of them, who would go to waste worrying about that paradox. You can't really lose your life's blood agonizing over the state of money or distribution. Either it will get better or it will get worse; it's out of our control. All we can do is do our best work.

But it sounds like it always got bad or worse—never really better.

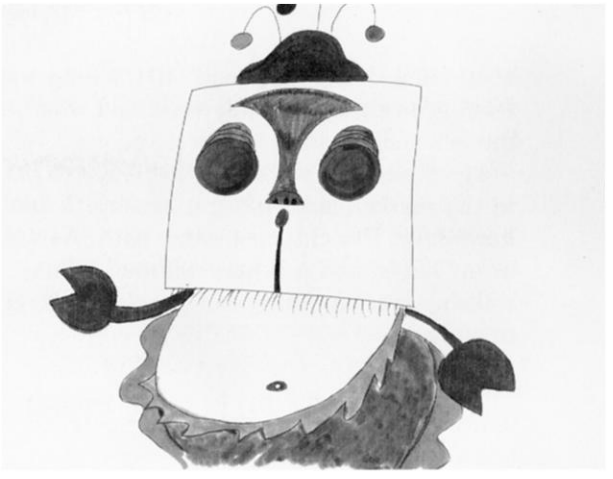
But something would always come along. Nowadays I run into second-generation people who say, "You know, that film changed my whole life!" So maybe it was shown through churches or in schools or at a lot of Sunday schools, I really don't know. But the quality of the viewing was so serious that it could really touch a fellow human being. And the quality of an audience is much more important than the numbers.

That's not a very populist viewpoint.

Well, I'm not very populist person.

That sounds elitist.

I don't think so. What I mean is, it's not the quantity of the audience, it's the quality of the contact with the audience. If a film is shown in a quiet place where people can really see it once



THE COSMIC EYE (1984)

or twice, and think about it and talk about it, and contribute their personae to the film, if there are ten such people seeing the film, then to me that is worth more than 20,000 in a big moviehouse. But I think all good ideas, and this applies to science, religion, philosophy, or politics, are shared first, intensely, and then it is exponential dissipation, or communication. I think that we're very misled by the electromagnetic force into thinking that we have to be on a screen simultaneously everywhere at once.

I believe my situation is changing, maybe because of the availability of the Disney home-video cassettes. In any case, maybe because I'm older and wiser, I don't lose energy agonizing over why there aren't more audiences in the United States. One has to have a personal adjustment and a social adjustment. My social adjustment is one of rage, and my personal adjustment is one that enables me to work.

For example, I've just begun work on a new short titled *Amazonia,* inspired by two South American myths and a shaman's warning that we must save the vanishing rain forest. I have shared the experience of developing the storyboard with my 18 students at Yale this semester, who have designed their own visual pleas on behalf of the rain forest. If I stopped working to think about the problems of distribution or where I will find the rest of the budget of *Amazonia,* I would be paralyzed.

One of the things that I'm so grateful to Johnny about is that he was really brave and walked out on the mainstream. His insistence that the medium could handle—handle is the wrong word—but *express* much more has, I think, taken animation down a different road than the main one, in other directions. I am

continuing down that road. It's a long way from growing up in Hollywood and what we thought then or what we perceived.

My choice as a working artist is not to play to the marketplace. It's not because I don't know how. I've chosen another path. As hard as my life is, and it is hard without Johnny, I wake up every morning and I can't wait to get to work.

THE HUBLEY FILMS ON VIDEO

All Hubley films are available in 16mm, VHS, Beta, and 3/4" video for non-theatrical, educational, and institutional use from Pyramid Films and Video, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1048. To order, call 1-800-421-2304.

From Walt Disney Home Video, six volumes are available. To order, call 1-800-225-550, ext. 480. All films are available in VHS or Beta, and are in color.

THE COSMIC EYE (1984), 71 min., by Faith Hubley

THE AGES OF HUMANKIND, 53 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: The Tender Game (1958), Dig (1972), WOW (Women of the World) (1975), People People People (1975), Cockaboody (1973).

FLIGHTS OF FANCY, 54 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: Windy Day (1967), Zuckerkandl (1968), Moonbird (1959), Adventures of an * (1956).

OF STARS AND MEN (1961), 53 min., by John and Faith Hubley

URBANSCAPE, 41 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: Of Men and Demons (1968), Harlem Wednesday (1957), Urbanissimo (1966), The Hole (1962).

A DELICATE THREAD, 49 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: Eggs (1970), Children of the Sun (1960), The Hat (1964), Second Chance: Sea (1976).

From Pacific Arts Video Records, two titles are available. To order, call 1-800-538-5856.

EVERYBODY RIDES THE CAROUSEL (1976), 72 min., by John and Faith Hubley

A DOONESBURY SPECIAL (1977), 30 min., by John and Faith Hubley and Garry Trudeau

In Canada, for all non-theatrical use of Hubley films, call Canadian Learning Company, 1-416-265-3333.

CHARLES EIDSVIK

Machines of the Invisible:
Changes in Film Technology in the Age of Video

Until the early 1970s, critical discussion of film technology and practice was a preserve monopolized by film-makers and by theorists such as André Bazin and Jean Mitry who were in close contact with film-making communities and often served as intellectual spokesmen for views commonly held by film-makers. The film-making community, in trade journals such as *The American Cinematographer* and *J.S.M.P.T.E.,* traded secrets, discussed craft, and celebrated its lore, myths, and mystique. Theorists and historians such as Bazin and Mitry—Mitry was himself a film-maker—built film-makers' perspectives into their views of how new technology catalyzes change in film history. This view, which permeates Mitry's *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma* and can also be found in essays such as "The Myth of Total Cinema" by Bazin, posits an "Idealist" and "technologically determinist" view of history, with film technol-

continuing down that road. It's a long way from growing up in Hollywood and what we thought then or what we perceived.

My choice as a working artist is not to play to the marketplace. It's not because I don't know how. I've chosen another path. As hard as my life is, and it is hard without Johnny, I wake up every morning and I can't wait to get to work.

THE HUBLEY FILMS ON VIDEO

All Hubley films are available in 16mm, VHS, Beta, and 3/4" video for non-theatrical, educational, and institutional use from Pyramid Films and Video, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1048. To order, call 1-800-421-2304.

From Walt Disney Home Video, six volumes are available. To order, call 1-800-225-550, ext. 480. All films are available in VHS or Beta, and are in color.

THE COSMIC EYE (1984), 71 min., by Faith Hubley

THE AGES OF HUMANKIND, 53 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: The Tender Game (1958), Dig (1972), WOW (Women of the World) (1975), People People People (1975), Cockaboody (1973).

FLIGHTS OF FANCY, 54 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: Windy Day (1967), Zuckerkandl (1968), Moonbird (1959), Adventures of an * (1956).

OF STARS AND MEN (1961), 53 min., by John and Faith Hubley

URBANSCAPE, 41 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: Of Men and Demons (1968), Harlem Wednesday (1957), Urbanissimo (1966), The Hole (1962).

A DELICATE THREAD, 49 min., by John and Faith Hubley
Contains: Eggs (1970), Children of the Sun (1960), The Hat (1964), Second Chance: Sea (1976).

From Pacific Arts Video Records, two titles are available. To order, call 1-800-538-5856.

EVERYBODY RIDES THE CAROUSEL (1976), 72 min., by John and Faith Hubley

A DOONESBURY SPECIAL (1977), 30 min., by John and Faith Hubley and Garry Trudeau

In Canada, for all non-theatrical use of Hubley films, call Canadian Learning Company, 1-416-265-3333.

CHARLES EIDSVIK

Machines of the Invisible:
Changes in Film Technology in the Age of Video

Until the early 1970s, critical discussion of film technology and practice was a preserve monopolized by film-makers and by theorists such as André Bazin and Jean Mitry who were in close contact with film-making communities and often served as intellectual spokesmen for views commonly held by film-makers. The film-making community, in trade journals such as *The American Cinematographer* and *J.S.M.P.T.E.,* traded secrets, discussed craft, and celebrated its lore, myths, and mystique. Theorists and historians such as Bazin and Mitry—Mitry was himself a film-maker—built film-makers' perspectives into their views of how new technology catalyzes change in film history. This view, which permeates Mitry's *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma* and can also be found in essays such as "The Myth of Total Cinema" by Bazin, posits an "Idealist" and "technologically determinist" view of history, with film technol-

ogy allowing film-makers ever greater potential for recreating reality.[1] Though technological determinism is an understandable belief among film-makers, whose jobs depend on machines, and for whom belief in technological determinism is anxiety-lessening, the position is hardly intellectually respectable.[2] Once Althusserian Marxism began to explore relationships between ideology and technology, an attack on "Idealist" and technologically determinist positions was inevitable. The attack, led by Jean-Louis Comolli, J.-L. Baudry, and Stephen Heath, attempted to critique technology within a "materialist" approach to cinema. Soon joined by feminist film critics such as Teresa de Lauretis, the analysis of technology and ideology has become a mainstream approach to technology at least within academe.

Though the academics (and Comolli himself) are prone to gaffes when discussing specific technological practice,[3] one cannot quarrel with their intentions or intelligence. Nevertheless, insofar as the job of historians is to account for change, their approach has little future, not because their methods—the search, for example for codes to which technology speaks—are weak, but because they have chosen to write and work from the "position of the spectator," from what can be seen and heard on movie screens, rather than on "tainted" film-maker-generated technical histories.[4] This would be fine except for a simple problem. Not only do most movies, in George Lellis's terms, "seek to hide the methods by which they produce their illusions,"[5] new production practices often are deliberately made invisible and inaudible to film spectators. Information on new technical practices is only briefly hinted at in trade journals but primarily is passed on through actual film-making.

If the last decade is any indication of how change occurs in cinema, a lot goes on below the realm of the easily perceivable. The central fact of recent cinema is the film industry's attempt to survive in the face of overwhelming competition from video. Film can compete with video only as a producing and large-screen exhibition medium. As a producing medium it can compete only on the basis of "quality," with quality defined as something film is not trying to achieve but already *has*. Technological innovation has largely served the purpose of making that quality either "better" or easier to achieve, but not different basically from the quality that already exists. New technology thus has expanded what can be filmed but not (deliberately at any rate) how we are meant to see films. Except in the area of special effects, an area in which mainstream film-makers have been able to use the old Hollywood ploy of turning big budgets and technical prowess into a publicity stunt, conceptually conservative technological innovation has been the norm. In understanding this innovation, perhaps the only relevant theorist would be Michel Foucault, whose approach to power struggles is relevant to just about any study of technical change.[6]

But the power struggle has been basically defensive. In the last decade, the majority of technical developments in the film industry have been aimed at facilitating extant production practices rather than at changing the "look" or sound of commercial films. Just about every new product has been advertised as something that makes film-making cheaper and easier, usually by allowing smaller crews or less schlepping of equipment on location. For each problem to be solved—light levels needed for shooting, the problem of equipment weight, problems of camera mobility, or the difficulty of getting good sound on location—different companies have offered competing solutions. For low-light filming, for example, Kodak, Fuji, and Agfa have offered faster filmstocks; Zeiss, Angenieux, Cooke, and Panavision have offered faster, sharper lenses; and various makers of lighting equipment have developed lights and light-control equipment that require little electricity and are highly portable. Alone, each new technology has had little effect. But in aggregate, the dozens of new technical possibilities made available have radically altered the construction and implied worlds of commercial narrative films. In terms of David Bordwell's "style-syuzhet-fabula" triad,[7] the technical developments have had surprisingly little effect on style, but a discernible effect on syuzhet (plot) construction. This has occurred because the new technologies allow more on-location film-making control, and thus freer use of the kinds of settings that can easily be shown, rather than left as syuzhet gaps, in fiction films. I will return to this issue later, after a review of the major recent changes in film technology.

How film-makers get images has been directly affected by changes in filmstock technology,

lenses, and cameras meant for location use. But the primary change in visuals has been indirectly created through Automated Dialogue Replacement (ADR) in postproduction. ADR masks its own existence so well that it is not audibly detectable to a film viewer. It has been radically liberating as a catalyst for other shifts in technical practice.[8]

The most important of the visual-technology shifts has been in an expected area, filmstock technology.[9] Until the mid-1970s Eastman's 5254/7254 negative was standard for narratives; when the new 5247/7247 stock came in, films changed visually and film-making got easier: the stock had such fine grain and wide exposure latitude (7 to 10 stops of light acceptance) that it became a new standard, one still more or less prevalent. Since then Eastman, in addition to unpublicized refinements of 5247, has produced three generations of high-speed stock, a fine-grained and contrastier replacement for 7247 in 16mm (7291), a daylight-balanced version of 5247 for use with the new high-efficiency "metal-halide" arc lamps known as "HMIs," and a stock designed purely for matte work in special effects film-making. Though the newest high-speed stocks have six-layer emulsions[10] and flattened-molecule technology (which combine to allow high-speed film-making without visible grain), each stock intercuts smoothly with the basic "47." The new high-speed stocks are rated at ASA 320 (compared to 47's ASA 100) and can be rated faster, even without extended lab development ("pushing"). For example, *Full Metal Jacket* was shot with the film rated at ASA 800.[11] To the viewer, almost nothing has changed in a decade. But because of the increase in film speed without increase in grain, now very low-light scenes can be filmed easily; because of compatible tone and grain-structure architecture, interiors and even night exteriors are similar in "look." Eastman, Fuji, and Agfa stocks can coexist as stylistic variants even within a single film without a viewer noticing.[12] The effect has been on the *kinds* of shots that can be incorporated into narratives smoothly. Night-for-night filming is now relatively easy, provided the new "superspeed" lenses are used.

Low-light filming problems also were "solved" by lens and lighting manufacturers unobtrusively. Quicker and sharper zoom and prime lenses enhance the possibilities of fast stock without introducing their own "look." Where it used to take 100 footcandles of light to get sharp images a decade ago (because older lenses were only really sharp stopped down) now 25 footcandles or even 10 is common. (In Eastman's demonstration film for film-to-video transfer techniques, one romantic candle-lit scene is lit with only one ordinary candle; it looks fine.) Not only is frying no longer an occupational hazard for actors; syuzhet construction now has very few light limitations. And because lighting problems in narrative film-making are in good part problems in schlepping lights and light-control equipment, and in getting juice to the lights, more efficient units such as HMIs have become popular. (An HMI is around five times as efficient as a tungsten lamp, twice as efficient as a carbon arc, and is daylight-temperature.) Quicker lighting set-ups with less generated heat and smaller electricity requirements expand location possibilities.

The additional location flexibility made possible by new visual tools made location work cheaper and easier; it also made story construction a bit different in potential. More low-light locations could be used, and they could be used in new ways. The city night locations of a *Desperately Seeking Susan* or *After Hours* were predicated on the new tools and stocks. Certainly night exteriors are not new; the ease with which they can be put into films *is*.

Complementing and accelerating the changes brought by stocks, lenses, and lights are postproduction sound developments. ADR, based on "insert" electronic technology (which "ramps" the onset of the bias tone so that sounds can be inserted in a track without pops or other recording artifacts) makes it possible to clean up location sound tracks or unobtrusively to replace location sound entirely in post-production. Now so ubiquitous that almost every feature film lists ADR credits, the art of sound replacement and remixing is an unsung but central contemporary film- and video-making craft. But except for the remarkable intelligibility of dialogue made possible by ADR and new versions of sound tools such as radio microphones, the main effect of new sound technology has been to free up crews on location. No longer is a take spoiled by bad sound; no longer need a boom shadow be in the way; no longer must the sound of a moving camera be so care-

fully masked. But the use or non-use of ADR in a scene is undetectable.

Curiously, a by-product of ADR has been in characterization and acting styles. Actors such as Robert DeNiro now often just mumble their lines on-location, and depend on ADR sessions to get the right intonation and subtextual subtlety into the final film.[13] Before ADR Europeans (such as Bergman) frequently "matched" dialogue either because of bad recording conditions or to re-do performance nuances;[14] with ADR this technique has become common, even everyday. Actors who do not have to project their voices can present different aspects of character than those who must be heard clearly by location microphones. Potentially this could cause large shifts in story and character construction. But the trick to the technique working is for the actor and film-maker not to get caught by viewers. Acting styles have changed since ADR. But only those within the industry know how or why.

The cameras used to shoot also have changed, and similarly, it is impossible to tell what camera has been used in any recent normal-format film. Which of the four generations of Arri 35BL or two generations of Moviecam or myriad generations of Panavision/Panaflex cameras a film was shot with is in no way visible. (Similarly it is impossible to tell what camera recent 16mm films were shot on.) Each generation in each manufacturer's line has become quieter, more reliable, more adaptable to video viewfinders, and more versatile, particularly for location filming, but no recent camera has advertised its existence to the viewer.

The most obtrusive technical change outside of the area of special effects in the last decade has been in camera movement. The Steadicam, Louma-type crane, Camrail, and jibbed dolly systems that have allowed us our current period-style of perpetually moving cameras are all consequences of fitting video viewfinders to film cameras, thus making them remote-controllable. The earliest uses of these tools were obtrusive: in *Bound for Glory* when the camera glided through a crowd smoothly and in ways not conceivable with a boom or dolly, the effect was startling; so was the camera smoothness in *An Unmarried Woman* when the camera went up flights of stairs with the actors; so were the hallway and maze and stairs moving-camera scenes in *The Shining*. But the Steadicam has become just part of current film technique, and the different devices for moving a camera by remote control are used in films almost interchangeably, usually without calling attention to themselves. The basic principle behind all the devices is that a camera can be moved more freely if its 50-lb. weight can be separated from the weight of the operator and focus-puller. Remote control and video tapes solve the problem: in the Steadicam by physically isolating the camera from the "handholding" operator; in the Louma and jib-based rigs by putting the controls at a console and locating the camera at the end of some sort of boom, with mechanical, hydraulic, or electronic servocontrol systems that allow manipulation of all camera controls.

Are developments in moving-camera technology revolutionary? They seemed so in the 1970s; now the situation is less clear. As the mobile camera became more common, the stylization apparent in a film such as *The Shining* has blended into a repertory of mobile-camera/stationary-camera paradigms. But these paradigms are not so much the consequence of technologically created opportunity as of an economics- and video-driven loss of other esthetic options. A decade ago, a film-maker could use the edges of the frame as part of compositional graphics—to lead the eye, to counterbalance other visual elements. But now cable and video distribution is the financial heart of the media storytelling business, so film-makers have to keep essential information away from the edges of the screen, and have to forget about using the graphic potentials of 2.3:1, 1.85:1 or 1.65:1 frame formats. All films must be composed for what the Europeans call "amphibious" life, for viewability on both on theater and on television screens. Without control of the shape or edge of frames, visual control must be done kinetically—especially because TV screens do not carry enough visual information for long-held static shots to retain viewer attention. Glance Esthetics, our contemporary period-style, has almost completely replaced Gaze Esthetics, in which film-makers left time for the viewer to contemplate the *mise-en-scène*. Glance Esthetics (perhaps seen in purest form on music videos) requires the moving camera. But it seems far less than obvious how one might analyze stylistic changes forced by economic changes that themselves reflected new technologies and broader-scale power struggles

within society. And the longer the new camera-moving technologies are with us, the less radical they seem—the more they seem mere successors to the dolly-shot esthetics championed by Max Ophuls and a whole batch of New Wave film-makers.

The sum of the technical shifts in the last decade has been to increase the possibilities of location film-making and to free film-makers from some logistical and financial production hassles. Though it would take statistical analysis to prove or disprove my impression that location exterior (and especially low-light) scenes are much more common now than they were a decade ago, and that they now more frequently form parts of the syuzhet rather than syuzhet gaps, the major drawback to such scenes (their cost) has been lessened. The film industry's ability "to turn the world into a story" (to use Mitry's famous phrase) has been increased in that more kinds of "natural" scenes can now be appropriated for fiction. But there is very little that is esthetically revolutionary in the new technologies, and nothing that would upset the basic film-making power structure. Changes have been conservative, a defense against inroads and threats brought by very rapidly evolving video technologies. Pressure from the outside rather than forces within the film industry has given us the new toys we work with on location. Each of these toys also plays to the extant power structure within the film-making community.

To grasp how new technology functions it is perhaps helpful to outline the economic and professional interests each technical shift favors. Low-budget film-makers, pushed out of the "industrial" market by video, mostly switched to video, bankrupting a lot of small 16mm equipment manufacturers and labs in the process. But at the higher budget levels, the mystique of film quality was promoted heavily by everyone from Eastman on down. Those with the most to lose by competition with video pushed the new technologies hardest. Craftspeople with a life invested in film technique were eager to try any new film tool that would make them more competitive. Rental houses could make money renting out new "top of the line" tools that changed quickly enough to keep film-makers from wanting to buy them, but still were rentable becuase they "worked like" older tools. Equipment manufacturers exploited film-makers' desire to survive and the willingness of rental houses to buy their stuff as a nudge to bring out "ever-better" tools. Accommodation was made to eventual video use by promoting the use of film as an originating medium and accepting the reality of Rank-Centel or Bosch video transfer. Driven by the nightmare of hearing the phrase "we could just as well have done it on tape," the film community made its internal power accommodations and promoted its mystique of quality in order to survive in the higher-budget ends of the industry. In a weird sense, the threat from video was approached with a triage mentality. What was irrevocably lost was simply accepted—films would be transferred to and shown on video. What was seen as "working" all right without change, that is, film's basic rhetoric and "tradition of quality," was deliberately *not* undermined by technical shifts but instead was reinforced. What was changed was production practices and technology. The changes made here were meant to *expand* the domain of fictionalized establishment practices into areas in which video could not compete well, such as location film-making. Video has (at least at present) real problems in dealing with on-location light contrasts. Film's light acceptance range makes it unbeatable on-location. A battery of technical changes were gradually instituted so that film's on-location advantages could be maximized. The last decade has been a power struggle between factions in the entertainment industry. Technology has simply been a tool for gaining or retaining financial power.

What can be said about the relationships between change in cinema and technical change on the basis of recent film history? Nothing very global. There have been some changes in what we see and hear and how actors act. But each change, as it came, was so subtle, so well masked, that no major change ever was "felt" by audiences. The film industry's defensive maneuvers of the 1970s and 1980s are far different from the flaunting of color, 3-D, and widescreen in the 1950s (and judging by industry finances, far more successful). But the changes that have occurred are still not fully played out, so to argue either the parallels or differences between the last decade and preceding ones would be to deny the complexity (and complex approaches to the craft) of film as a technological medium and art form. In film, as Ingmar

Bergman put it, "God is details." So large theoretical claims must be put on hold, or at least balanced with one another in recognition of the different perspectives from which cinema can be seen.

The basic problem in theorizing about technical change in cinema is that accurate histories of the production community and its perspectives, as well as of the technological options that face film-makers, must precede the attempt to theorize. And theory itself must limit itself to a little bit of history at a time. It is not that we do not need theory that can help us understand the relationships between larger social and cultural developments, ideology, technical practice, and the history of cinema. Rather it is that whatever we do in our attempts to theorize, we need to welcome all the available sources of information, from all available perspectives, tainted or not, and try to put them in balance. Anything less than that approach lessens us as students of cinema by denying the complexity of the art we study.

NOTES

1. See André Bazin, "The Myth of Total Cinema," *What is Cinema?* Vol One. Trans. Hugh Gray. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967, 17-22. Mitry's position, often lumped with Bazin's, puts the "advance" technology allows differently: new technology gives film-makers ever-greater means to manipulate images of reality. Mitry defended his position in virtually monthly columns in the French journal *Cinématographe* until at least 1984. Though attacks on his position often are printed in English, his defenses and counterattacks were far more interesting than the attacks. Often Mitry argued that his semiotics-trained attackers knew very little about cinema.

2. For a general put-down of technological determinism see Brian Winston, *Misunderstanding Media.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. More specific attacks on the perspective in film history are undertaken by Barry Salt in *Film Style and Technology: History and Analysis.* London: Starword, 1983.

3. For example, Stephen Heath, in *Questions of Cinema,* attempts an attack on Liz-Anne Bawden's comment, in the *Oxford Companion,* "It is technical advances which underlie stylistic innovations like handheld techniques . . ." Heath writes: "Arriflex cameras were available in Hollywood in the late 1940s but there was no particular turn to handheld sequences in response to the technical advance (nor in France at the same period in response to the Eclair Cameflex)." (230) Heath's example is silly. The old Arri and CM3 Cameflex were good handheld cameras but neither was pin-registered or self-silenced. Until recently, American professional film-makers rarely regarded a non-pin-registered camera as reliable enough for feature use. And without a blimp the Arri and Eclair could not be used for dialogue shooting; the Eclair, with its ratchet drive, was especially noisy. Blimps added between 85 and 110 lbs. to either camera's weight and made the cameras useless for handholding. The Arri and Cameflex caught on slowly as "wild" cameras and for European low-budget productions where dubbing-in of dialogue was the norm. But they were technically unsuited for the mainstream industry. Bawden, in fact, is correct if one adds "self-silenced" to her "hand-held" comment. The 16mm Eclair NRP and ACL and the Auricon conversions of the early 1960s did allow the *cinéma vérité* movement to exist. The interplay between tools and tool-users is far more complicated than many academics such as Heath would like to admit. Even Comolli—who as a film-maker should know better—in his essay, "Machines of the Visible," attacks Mitry's defense of orthochromatic stock by defending panchromatic film (quoted from Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath, ed. *The Cinematic Apparatus.* New York: St. Martin's, 1980): "A further advantage. . . the replacement of orthochromatic by panchromatic stock depends again on the greater sensitivity of the latter. Not only did the gain in sensitivity permit the realignment of the 'realism' of the cinematic image with that of the photographic image, it also compensated for the loss of light due to the change from a shutter speed of 16 or 18 frames per second to the speed of 24 frames a second necessitated by sound." (131)

The only way such compensation could occur is if the *overall* film speed (ASA) of panchromatic film were higher. As Barry Salt points out (p. 222) panchromatic and ortho stock were about the same speed (20-25 ASA), and Kodak introduced a superspeed ortho film (ASA 40-50) in 1926. Thus there was no speed advantage in panchromatic stock. Comolli apparently does not know the difference between red sensitivity and overall film speed. One hopes he has someone else do his light readings and shoot his films.

4. See Heath, *Questions of Cinema,* 226-229.

5. George Lellis, "Perception in the Cinema: a Fourfold Confusion" in *Intermedia,* ed. Gary Gumpert & Robert Cathcart. New York: Oxford, 1979. p. 388.

6. I am indebted to Gorham Kindem's unpublished paper, "Theories of Film Technology: the Case of Color Film," for the insight that Foucault's theories could be applied to specific issues within film's technical history.

7. David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

8. I am indebted to James Langwell, Lanco Sound, Inc., Atlanta GA, for theoretical and practical instruction in insert re-recording techniques and for contacts with ADR specialists.

9. See Peter Wollen, "Cinema and Technology: A Historical Overview" in de Lauretis & Heath, eds., *The Cinematic Apparatus,* 14-22. Wollen correctly asserts that the most important breakthroughs throughout film history have been in film stock—in chemistry not mechanics. Information on filmstocks in my essay are from *American Cinematographer, J.S.M.P.T.E.,* and manufacturers' technical representatives.

10. See David W. Leitner, "A Look at Color Negative," *The Independent* Vol. 4, Number 10, February 1982, 5-6 for a description of six-layer negative filmstock technology.

11. Ron Magid, "*Full Metal Jacket:* Cynic's Choice," *American Cinematographer* September 1987, 74-84.

12. See George Turner, "*Out of Africa:* David Watkin," *American Cinematographer* April 1986, 84-86. Watkin used Agfa for exteriors, Kodak for interiors. Watkin claims he liked Agfa's wide latitude and soft colors; one wonders, however, if the reason might have been that with Eastman stock, shooting outside in bright light, black and Caucasian faces are difficult to expose in the same frame; with Agfa or Fuji it's no problem. Eastman's technical representatives admit it's best to use a "Half Double Fog" filter in front of the lens when filming very dark-skinned blacks and light-skinned whites under harsh sunlight. There is a case to be made for issues of skin color being built into even filmstock specifications.

13. Jean-Pierre Grasset of Les Films du Soir first informed me of DeNiro's sub-recordable sound levels; a crewmember on *Angel Heart* confirmed it. In *Once Upon a Time in America,* however, DeNiro's location dialogue was mostly usable, despite its low volume; the soundman mixed inputs from a number of hidden microphones to get usable takes.

14. See Stig Bjorkman, Torsten Manns, & Jonas Sima, *Bergman on Bergman: Interviews with Ingmar Bergman,* trans. Paul Britten Austin. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973. 257-258. When exactly Bergman began "matching" dialogue in postproduction is

THOMAS DOHERTY

Full Metal Genre:

Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam Combat Movie

For over a decade now, Hollywood has been succeeding where Washington consistently failed: namely, in selling Vietnam to the American public. To be fair, the motion picture industry enjoys a crucial edge. If the military's classic mistake is to fight with the tactics of the last war, the moviemaker's decisive prerogative is the license to fight the same war over and over again. Whatever the historical uniqueness of what *Time-Life* Books calls "the Vietnam experience," the conventions of the Hollywood combat film have proven flexible enough to accommodate America's outcast war even as Vietnam has in turn reinvigorated a moribund Hollywood genre.

Released in the wake of Oliver Stone's *Platoon* and sharing marquee space with *Hamburger Hill* and *The Hanoi Hilton,* Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* exemplifies the Vietnam War film in its mature stage, a stage whose distinguishing quality is its reliance on cinematic, not historical, experience. The Vietnam film has not yet settled into the ripe generic dotage of the private eye or western genre, but it has reached the point where previous Vietnam films as much as Vietnam memory determine its rough outlines. As with any genre, a recurrent set of visual motifs, narrative patterns, and thematic concerns has emerged. For better and worse, these conventions are the immediate and unavoidable referents for *Full Metal Jacket,* a cinematic usurpation of the historical record that reaffirms the vital cultural function of genre: to ease division and reconcile conflict through myth. Like the Vietnam War Memorial on the Washington Mall, the Vietnam combat film is the occasion for a soothing ritual of atonement and celebration, a screen that reflects back the two faces of American regret and pride.

That range of reaction is neatly encompassed by Michael Herr and Gustav Hasford, Kubrick's co-screenwriters for *Full Metal Jacket.* Both were participant-observers in the war, Herr as a civilian journalist, Hasford as a combat correspondent for the Marines; both wrote estimable accounts of their tours of duty, Herr in the crystalline memoir *Dispatches* (1978) and Hasford in the phantasmagorical war novel that serves as the source for Kubrick's film, *The Short Timers* (1979). Herr's book is a kaleidoscopic series of snapshots alternately—simultaneously—positive and negative. Despite everything, Herr finds the Vietnam ground at once immoral and holy, glorious and horrible. Its penultimate image is darkly ironic. A wounded wreck of a war correspondent, crippled in mind and body, raves about the impossibility of fulfilling a publisher's mandate to write a book "whose purpose would be to once and for all take the glamor out of war." He shrieks out a question that antiwar film-makers have agonized over since *The Big Parade:* "Take the glamor out of war! I mean how the bloody hell can you do *that*?"

Hasford supplies the answer. Where Herr is sentimental, and mythopoetic, Hasford is searing and ruthless—above all, toward the celluloid-sustained image of Men at War. In *The Short Timers* Hollywood's combat dreams run headlong into Vietnam's charnel reality. "Harry S. Truman once said that the Marine Corps has a propaganda machine almost equal to Stalin's," observes the Information Service Officer in Hasford's book, and the "crap civilians have seen in Jack Webb's *The D.I.* and Mr. John

---

vague. Vilgot Sjöman reports in *L136* that Bergman was having location sound troubles on *Winter Light.* A truism in low-budget film-making is that one can hear a film's budget problems before you see them. Bergman's films, like most European films, traditionally had miniscule budgets. To cover the budget and location shooting problems they "matched" sound in postproduction, even before ADR.

Wayne's *The Sands of Iwo Jima*'' helps power the engine. An elite, all-volunteer service, the Marines boast a set of elaborate rituals and a history of bloody combat that make them the most cultish, celebrated, and cinematic of the American armed forces. Not for nothing is the signature photograph from World War II a Marine moment, the flag-raising on Mount Surabachi, Iwo Jima. ''Grunts are good show business, but we make them what they are,'' boasts Hasford's ISO, ''Marines fight harder because Marines have bigger legends to live up to.'' Hasford defaces that recruiting poster portrait of warfare and debunks a military code of honor rendered alternately immoral and inane by Vietnam—though ''debunk'' is probably too soft a word for Hasford's venomous attack on the brotherhood he once served.

In Kubrick, who launched his own blitzkrieg assault on the military in wars hot [*Paths of Glory* (1957)] and cold [*Dr. Strangelove* (1964)], Hasford's bitter, subversive vision might seem to have found a sympathetic interpreter, just as the Vietnam war had finally met up with the director best equipped to do it proper injustice. In the transference from novel to film, however, the Marine machine emerges in pretty good working order. Negotiating the space between Herr's mythic shadings and Hasford's black hatred, Kubrick opts for accommodation and continuity. Even for the expatriate film-maker, it seems, the combat film has a code of conduct as severe, inviolable, and ultimately seductive as the one enforced on Parris Island.

Appropriately, the first rule of engagement for the Vietnam combat film is acknowledgment of its own patrimony. The blood ties between the traditional combat film and its Vietnam descendant cut deeper than the usual anxiety of generic influence. Always, there is the whisper of complicity, the suspicion that Hollywood lent its imagination to the disaster. A true son of Hollywood and television, the Vietnam soldier was weaned on mass-mediated fantasies of World War II combat. Never far from his consciousness are films like *The Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949), *Halls of Montezuma* (1950), and *To Hell and Back* (1955), TV series such as *Combat* and *The Desert Rats,* and comic books like DC's *Sgt. Rock* and Marvel's *Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandoes.* As if in penance for the excesses and duplicities of the past, the Vietnam combat film embraces a stony narrative authenticity and

FULL METAL JACKET: *Matthew Modine, Lee Emery*

cynical verisimilitude—or at least it must appear to. Obviously, the fanciful action-adventure pics of Chuck Norris and Sylvester Stallone partake of the old matinee spirit with relish, but reflection and seriousness dominate the genre, and not just the works of the big-gun auteurs. More often than not, a film depicting combat in Vietnam presents itself as no blood-and-guts Hollywood fantasy, but the genuine item, one step removed from actually being in the bush (viz., *Time*'s cover on *Platoon:* ''Vietnam As It Really Was'').

Tellingly, in Vietnam vernacular an act of reckless courage is ''pulling a John Wayne.'' Almost obsessively, the Vietnam genre returns to the backlot heroics of Wayne, above all his role as steely Marine Sgt. John Stryker in *The Sands of Iwo Jima.* (In addition to *The Short Timers,* the film is singled out by name in Ron Kovic's *Born on the Fourth of July* and Philip Caputo's *A Rumor of War.*) Oddly, it is one of the handful of films in which John Wayne dies and his tough-as-nails sergeant is by no means a character to be naively admired. Alcoholic, divorced, insubordinate, Sgt. Stryker is among the walking wounded; he charges an enemy machinegun nest because he has so little to lose. No dewy-eyed paean to combat glory, *The Sands of Iwo Jima* portrays war as unforgiving and cruel: a thoughtless coffee break causes the death of one's comrades and the Duke himself gets shot in a surprise ending as radically disruptive as anything in the Vietnam film genre. By all accounts, however, such subtleties were lost on the adolescent audience. In what has become a *locus classicus* of the Vietnam war memoir, Ron Kovic describes how he and his friend Castiglia would sit spellbound before *To Hell and Back* and *The Sands of Iwo Jima,*

feeding off Hollywood for the raw material of schoolboy daydreams:

> The Marine Corps hymn was playing in the background as we sat glued to our seats, humming the hymn together and watching Stryker, played by John Wayne, charge up the hill and get killed just before he reached the top. And then they showed the men raising the flag on Iwo Jima with the Marines' hymn still playing, and Castiglia and I cried in our seats. I loved the song so much, and every time I heard it I would think of John Wayne and the brave men who raised the flag on Iwo Jima that day. I would think of them and cry. Like Mickey Mantle and the fabulous New York Yankees, John Wayne in *The Sands of Iwo Jima* became one of my heroes.

Exacerbating Wayne's iconic centrality was his infamous foray into Vietnam agit-prop, *The Green Berets* (1968). A memorable scene in *The Short Timers* has real-life grunts bent over in hysterics at a screening of Wayne's war: "At the end of the movie, John Wayne walks off into the sunset with a spunky little orphan. The grunts laugh and whistle and threaten to pee all over themselves. The sun is setting in the South China Sea—in the East—which makes the end of the movie as accurate as the rest of it."

The Vietnam film consistently makes reference by way of debunking to the on-screen firefights and backlot heroics of the classical Hollywood combat film, as when the gung-ho lieutenant in *Go Tell the Spartans* (1978) learns too late that the VC fire live ammunition. Throughout *Full Metal Jacket,* John Wayne mimic Private Joker (Matthew Modine) harkens back to the matinee dreams of boyhood and voices his adult disillusionment and displacement with drawling impersonations: "Listen up, Pilgrims. . . ."

A proper sense of Vietnam decorum demands the proper language. Nothing captures the Nam better than the Word. Any Vietnam film with pretentions to verisimilitude has faithfully to record and incorporate into its dialogue the unique speech of the Vietnam era soldier. Just as the FNG (fucking new guy) is initiated into the soldierly subculture where "book" is a verb and "dinks" is a noun, so the audience is initially confused with Vietnam-variety vernacular. Needless to say, the creative deployment of obscenity, especially "fuck" and derivatives thereof, has an incantatory function. Likewise, a whole range of military acronyms (AIT, CIB, RPG), bastardized Vietnamese ("most rickeytick"), Japanese ("skosh"), French (the ubiquitous "beaucoup"), broken English, and black English vernacular remains an exotic subcultural dialect, the knowledgeable use of which grants admission to the brotherhood of Vietnam warriors. Like all subcultural slang, its purpose is not only to identify the kindred spirit but to brand the non-conversant as alien—as in *Full Metal Jacket* when a seasoned grunt explains to FNG Rafter Man, and the audience, the meaning of "the thousand-yard stare."

Opposing the richness and directness of the speech of the troops, though often employed ironically by them, is the Orwellian language of euphemism and disguise used by the Armed Forces and the civilian authorities. The arcane military call signs, the stolid bureaucratese, and the forms and statistics that are so much a part of military life reached cavernous depths of obtuseness and impenetrability in Vietnam. The classic is "to terminate with extreme prejudice" immortalized in *Apocalypse Now,* though the editorial instructions given to combat correspondent Joker—to distinguish between an "evacuee" and a "refugee" and to change "search and destroy" to "sweep and clean"—rank a close second.

Both the soldierly slang and the Orwellian language serve an analogous function: emotional insulation. Hence also the troops' consistent replacement of surnames by nicknames—totally so in *Full Metal Jacket,* whose dramatis personae carry monikers like Joker, Rafter Man, Cowboy, Animal Mother, and Eightball. As Tim O'Brian wrote in his war memoir *If I Die in a Combat Zone,* "the platoon's squad leaders were named Ready Whip, Nestle's Quick, and Shake and Bake. And when two of them—Tom and Arnold—were killed two months later, the tragedy was somehow lessened and depersonalized by telling ourselves that ol' Ready Whip and Quick got themselves wasted by slopes." Ironically, it is the linguistic element, the verbal not the visual, that most clearly distinguishes the Vietnam film from predecessor combat films as well as its contemporary action-adventure competition.

In *Full Metal Jacket,* the language is splendid, a lyric bombardment of raw Marine obscenity—homophobic, misogynistic, sado-masochistic, racist, and exuberantly poetic. Where Clint Eastwood's gunnery sergeant in *Heartbreak Ridge* (1987) was but a colorfully dirty wordsmith, Sgt. Hartman is a poet laureate of

verbal vulgarity. Spouting a series of ethnic slurs at the raw recruits (a.k.a. "amphibious shit") and preaching a rank military egalitarianism ("you are all equally worthless"), Hartman is such a virtuoso of vile invective that the main response to his torrents of abuse is delight in a master at work. Screenwriters Kubrick, Herr, and especially Hasford (the film's most memorable phrases are drawn verbatim from his *The Short Timers*) bestow upon Hartman the film's best lines and Lee Emery, a for-real ex-DI, turns in its most magnetic performance, a portrayal that for all its hard-ass hyperbole never moves from boot camp into Sontag camp. His declamations are so hilarious and he so dominates the long first act—a self-contained, fifty-minute induction into Marine subculture—that you're sorry to see him go.

For all his vocal dominance, Hartman is the most impersonal of cinematic DIs. Outside of his DI persona, we know nothing about him. In following the maggot point of view of Hasford's book, Kubrick departs radically from the Marine Corps indoctrination film of classical Hollywood, a form that consistently subordinated battlefield action to melodramatic revelation, that stripped away layers of military insulation to get to the warm human core beneath the officer corps. The prime narrative movement was not from tranquillity to combat, but from basic training to Marine Membership, a ceremonial rite of passage into the Corps that was more dramatically central than any beachhead landing. The induction and basic training sequences, often shot on location at Parris Island and made with the cooperation of the Marine Corps, outpointed combat footage in both running time and emotional investment. Getting through training was the real initiation rite. The touchstone is Jack Webb's *The D.I.* (1957), which dispenses with battle sequences altogether. Less a combat film than a familial melodrama, *The D.I.* has Marine drill sergeant Jim Moore battling for the soul of a recalcitrant recruit, not an enemy machinegun nest. In the persons of John Wayne, Jack Webb, or Clint Eastwood, the gruff drill sergeant fronted a complex, haunted human being. About Hartman, Kubrick tells us nothing. The man is his function. Kubrick's impersonality extends to the lower orders: there's none of the economical character delineation and identification that would humanize the recruits, no Warner

GO TELL THE SPARTANS

Brothers-style platoonery. This is a film short on reaction shots and nearly bereft of eyeline matches: the vantage is distancing, almost antiseptic, as scrubbed-down as the squad's ghostly white barracks lavatory.

In spite of—because of—the mechanical treatment of mechanical training, the ritual ballet of basic training (small arms drill, mock combat, obstacle course, inspection, quick-time march) has a synchronized beauty that seduces director and spectator alike. Conjuring the Orwellian union of the masses with Big Brother, Kubrick renders the visceral appeal of being a working cog in a well-oiled machine, of enveloping the private self in a full metal jacket. "The marines want killers, not robots," Joker's narrative voice-over observes, but getting in lockstep is the necessary first step.

The quagmire that was Vietnam finds apt expression in the imagistic and thematic concentration on the literal and metaphoric grossness of "life in country," a veritable fecal obsession wallowed in most vividly in Stallone's sewage immersion scene in *Rambo*. The line repeated most often, *Full Metal Jacket*'s mock benediction, is the description of earthly life as a "world of shit," an existential state the military and Vietnam cannot be held totally responsible for. Plunged deepest into the cesspool is recruit Leonard (Vincent D'Onofrio), a good-natured goober Hartman labels "Private Pyle." Pudgy, slack-jawed, totally lacking in motor skills, he is the platoon goat. Hartman ritually humiliates him, first by forcing him to march behind the platoon, thumb in mouth, pants around his ankles, and later by demanding he scarf a jelly doughnut while his comrades pay the price of his gluttony with push-ups at his feet. Urged by Hartman to give Leonard the "proper motivation," the recruits stage a nighttime, nightmar-

ish raid on the sleeping baby. One by one, they close in for an assault, savagely whacking him with soap wrapped tightly in towels. Joker, who passes for an audience point of identification, joins in first reluctantly and then with brutal enthusiasm. When we next see Leonard in stark close-up, he is a new, or rather a non, man. Eyeballs rolled high, mouth back in a ghastly grin, he has gone over the edge. No one fixes an actor's gaze like Kubrick—think of Jack Nicholson leering demonically in *The Shining*—and Leonard's face holds a terror more potent than anything awaiting the boys in the Nam. He truly looks to be, as he says, in a world of shit.

It is in the barracks lavatory that he freaks out, that the violent rite of passage comes to a head. For this sequence, Kubrick's set design bears comment because it is reportedly his only liberty with authentic Marine interior decor. Stark white, two rows of open toilets face each other, with Leonard, himself in white underwear and astride a john, smack dab in this literal world of shit. On fire watch, Joker enters and Leonard explains that his M-16 is indeed being loaded with live rounds ("7.62 mm, full metal jacket"). Hartman bursts in on the commotion, totally unintimidated by the live weapon, and bellows, "What is your major malfunction, numbnuts?" A patented slo-mo impact shot records Leonard's high-velocity answer: Hartman's chest explodes and he falls lifeless to the immaculate floor. After a tense consideration of Joker, Leonard sits down, turns the barrel into his mouth, and blows himself against the bathroom wall. His red blood splatters against the pure white tile. After this, Vietnam is redundant.

The first glimpse of life "in country" is the chassis of a leather-skirted hooker sashaying down the streets of Saigon. Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots" provides ironic sound-track accompaniment, the veiled S&M undertones of the title footwear conjuring also the forward march of military escalation. Like the 1966 pop hit, double meanings and metaphorical associations tend to proliferate in the context of Vietnam—sex and violence, johns and soldiers, the screwing of the Vietnamese. Both playground and killing ground, Vietnam is a landscape for American projections.

That the Vietnam war was an imperialist extension of the American frontier mythos, especially in the campaign waged against the native population, has long been an article of faith for New Left historians. The extension of the American frontier myth to the jungles of Southeast Asia is also explicit in novels such as Mailer's *Why Are We in Vietnam?* and the Leatherstocking-inspired film, *The Deer Hunter* (1977). As a sort of surrogate western, the Vietnam film offers a convenient new territory for interracial firefights. Among other reasons for the decline of the classical Hollywood western is surely the inadmissibility of guilt-free cowboy-and-Indian play—the conspicuously absent element in two recent attempts at genre resuscitation, *Silverado* (1985) and *Pale Rider* (1985), being the native population. The Vietnam cowboy has it both ways, alternately battling the Indian-like VC or, as in *Rambo* and *Missing in Action,* assuming himself the guise of the Apache warrior. In *Full Metal Jacket,* the connection is articulated for the cogniscenti during a tracking shot where the grunts face a network camera crew and call out in sequence a related screen fantasy called *Vietnam: The Movie* for the folks back home. "We'll let the gooks play the Indians," suggests a soldier.

The frontier ethos was not without compensations. In good Leslie Fiedler fashion, the American dream of homoerotic interracial brotherhood is played out in the jungles of Vietnam no less than on the waters of the Mississippi. If racial animosities remain acute in the rear echelon, racism is a dangerous indulgence in the bush. Propelled both by good Hollywood liberalism and the box-office power of the inner-city black audience, blacks appear as featured and secondary players, always among the grunt ensemble, often as non-com lifers and grizzled majors. In *Full Metal Jacket,* for example, the huge white grunt Animal Mother hassles and slurs his black comrade Eightball. But when Eightball lies wounded, stranded in an open field, it is Animal Mother who disobeys orders and makes a heroic rescue charge.

Though the black-white relation remains primary, two other ethnics are featured up front in the Vietnam combat film. Contrary to popular belief, Hispanic Americans, not black Americans, served and died out of all proportion to their numbers in Vietnam. (The recognition of the Hispanic American is also symbolized by his representation in the statue at the entrance of the Vietnam War Memorial on the Washington Mall.) The roots here in the

classical combat film—with the obligatory Bronx Jew, Brooklyn Italian, and Iowa Farm Boy issued to each squad—are self-evident. The portrayal of the Vietnam platoon often deploys the same cozy clichés of ethnic representation and tolerant camaraderie as its predecessor.

By contrast, the South Vietnamese troops, and by implication America's latest prominent immigrant group, are the object of derision and disdain. Reflecting a widespread contempt toward the ARVN forces by American combat units, the nominal allies come in for consistently bad treatment. Typical is the establishing sequence in *Go Tell the Spartans* (1978) which features ARVN forces torturing a captured VC. The screenplay of *Full Metal Jacket* is even harder on the South Vietnamese than Hasford's source novel. Cowboy complains of how he keeps running into ARVN troops "coming the other way" [retreating] and opines that "we're shooting the wrong gooks." To a man (and woman), the natives are whores, pimps, thieves, and cowards. One troop offers to sell an ARVN rifle with the old line "never been fired, only been dropped once." Thus, the introductory violent "action" for the Vietnam section of *Full Metal Jacket:* Saigon street punks stealing a camera from Joker and Rafter Man. After being ripped off, Rafter Man complains, "We're supposed to be helping them and they shit all over us." The punks respond by flipping the Americans the finger. Only rarely are the ARVN granted a degree of respect and equality with Americans, as in *The Green Berets* or in the person of Stallone's female sidekick in *Rambo.* By way of pointed comparison, the VC are consistently presented as the superior Vietnamese species: ruthlessly efficient, coldly determined, and authentically heroic. In the centerpiece action climax of *Full Metal Jacket,* a lone VC sniper (who turns out to be a woman) pins down and tears apart an entire squad of bewildered and desperate American Marines.

The director of *2001* pays his usual clinical attention to forensic detail. The crucible of combat is rendered with state-of-the-art technology and showcased for maximum effect. Advances in battlefield verisimilitude (gasoline explosions, timed charges, mock-ups, mattes, and miniatures) and stunt choreography (above all the trademark helicopter assaults and dust-offs, often piloted by veterans turned stuntmen) make any Vietnam combat film an exhilarating special-effects rollercoaster. The vivid depiction of the gruesome effect of sophisticated weapons on human flesh is not neglected, as in the ghastly appearance of the armless troop or the infamous brain-smashing sequence in *Platoon.*

FULL METAL JACKET

Kubrick's most impressive special-effects achievement is his re-creation of the bombed-out city of Hue on a Pinewood backstage. Drawing on network videotape, the *Life* magazine photos of John Olsen, and Herr's eyewitness descriptions, Kubrick built the set from the ground up, utilizing a British industrial site slated for destruction. For all the painstaking reconstruction of the burned shell of the city, however, the tableau functions mainly as a hallucinatory dreamscape, not a geographical space. The stylization in the set design (even the bullets in the brick walls seem distributed with mathematical randomness) and the textbook flourish of the combat montages (the waist-level advance of the Steadicam, the studied entrapments of the *mise-en-scène,* the slo-mo rending of flesh) are calculated compromises. Kubrick chooses imagistic control over location verisimilitude or documentary realism. His Hue looks nothing like Vietnam—not even Thailand, the Philippines, or Mexico, the usual scenic backdrops for the Vietnam genre. Lacking the authority of the participant-observer, Kubrick won't compete with Oliver Stone on his own turf. *Full Metal Jacket* is not Vietnam As It Really Was, but as Kubrick realized it. For him, the odyssey through whatever space will always lead back to the self.

Or selves. The inside joke in this antiwar war film is its own double-dealing nature. With a peace symbol adorning his combat helmet, Joker himself is the bearer of the schizophrenic sensibility. "I was trying to suggest the duality of

man," he observes a little too smartly to his superiors, "You know, the Jungian thing." Just as the Vietnam combat film depicts the absurdity and immorality of the war even as it exalts the courage and nobility in the American presence, Joker embodies mutually exclusive features. Like the Memorial on the DC Mall, he reflects no single face of the Vietnam War.

In that acceptance of options, *Full Metal Jacket* becomes far more complex and, yes, affirmative than Hasford's bitter novel. Hasford's nihilism knows no depths: his novel climaxes with an appalling bloodbath that has his narrator Joker reject finally the sacred Marine oath never to leave his wounded behind. He kills the stranded Cowboy rather than let his squad move forward and "commit suicide for a tradition." The climactic scene in *Full Metal Jacket* gives a similar scenario a different ending. Despite moments of terror and panic, despite the killing damage done them, the squad sustains and lives up to the Marine tradition—the mercy killing is aimed at the VC sniper, not a fellow Marine. Marines have died, but in a way not all that far from *The Sands of Iwo Jima,* the Marine tradition is upheld. Consecrated in the blood of the innocent, Joker attains a kind of purifying transcendence: "I'm in a world of shit, yes, but I am alive and I am not afraid." The final sequence frames the surviving grunts departing Hue at night in a beautiful, bloody haze. They are singing the Mickey Mouse Club theme—carrying Joker, and presumably the spectator, away from Vietnam and back to Hollywood, a movement that the Vietnam combat film has itself completed.

FACULTY POSITION IN
FILM STUDIES AND LITERATURE
FOR THE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS PROGRAM
AT
BOSTON UNIVERSITY

The University Professors Program at Boston University invites applicants for a tenure-track assistant or associate professorship in Film Studies and Literature to work in its program in "Comparative Studies in Literature and the Arts." The applicant will be working primarily within the context of a program which although based in literature, reaches out to a variety of disciplines, including history, sociology, politics, the plastic arts and music. Application deadline is March 1, 1989. Send application letter, list of references, and C.V. to: Professor R. Cardona, Chairman, Search Committee, University Professors Program, Boston University, 745 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

BLACK FRAMES
Critical Perspectives on Independent Black Cinema
edited by Mbye B. Cham and Claire Andrade-Watkins
A rare systematic examination of what is unique and what is common to the making of independent Black cinema in English-speaking ("Anglophone") Africa, in the United States, and in Britain.
This informed and provocative collection of original essays by noted scholars, critics, and practitioners of independent Black cinema includes work by Jim Pines, James Snead, Manthia Diawara, Kobena Mercer, Teshome Gabriel, and Clyde Taylor.
Distributed for Celebration of Black Cinema.
Illustrated $9.95 paper

Bush Mama: Haile Gerima, courtesy of: Mypheduh Films

GLOBAL TELEVISION
edited by Cynthia Schneider and Brian Wallis
Is the international spread of American television programming swamping the national identities of many countries with "wall-to-wall *Dallas*"? *Global Television* investigates worldwide conflicts arising from the dramatic changes that have taken place in the structure and uses of television in the past decade.
A *Wedge* special issue.
80 illustrations $12.50 paper

Available from fine bookstores or directly from
The MIT Press
55 Hayward Street • Cambridge, MA 02142

DAVID JAMES

Hardcore:
Cultural Resistance in the Postmodern

(think of punk rock or pornography)
—Fredric Jameson

With the destruction or co-optation of working-class movements in the US since the thirties, opposition to capitalism has increasingly been mobilized around Third World struggles of decolonization. But since the end of the invasion of Vietnam, cultural practice in the West has lost even this focus of resistance and become increasingly collusive and administered, mirroring indeed a depletion of working-class self-consciousness so devastating that it has allowed an unprecedented currency for attacks on the tenability of basic Marxist concepts, even that of class. Here, in the Baudrillardian hyperspace of the postmodern, cultural resistance seems so impossible that we are all but persuaded to rewrite the entire history of modernism around that impossibility. In the dismal glitter of our time, when the emblems of the Russian Revolution decorate our T-shirts and the Cabaret Voltaire is an only mildly fractious dance band, we wonder indeed if a real avant-garde ever existed. Despite this suspicion, we nevertheless still recognize that postmodern culture is integrated into the corporate state to an unprecedented degree. Today (and now I return my epigraph to its context), "although postmodernism is . . . offensive . . . (think of punk rock or pornography), it is no longer at all 'oppositional' . . . indeed, it constitutes the very dominant or hegemonic aesthetic of consumer society itself and significantly serves [its] commodity production" (Jameson, 1984:196).

For film and television history, a narrative form of this doxa would trace the termination of the great efflorescence of sixties avant-garde film at the end of the Vietnam war, and then a shift from film to video as the preferred high-art motion-picture medium. Though the social energies that produced the sixties' avant-gardes did temporarily sustain video practices more or less modelled on structural film's exemplary negativity, they were so weakened that by the late seventies artist's video had collapsed into the backside of the beast. In short, television—video and broadcast television together—is the postmodern mutant form of film, and in it both illusionist narrative and its discontents, both the entertainment industry and opposition to it, are subsumed in the same hegemony. Disdaining attachment to social contestation or even disaffiliation, the tropes of high modernism linger only as reflexive signs that constantly defer extra-textual engagement.

While accepting this account as generally true, I want to propose some contrary instances to what Jameson considers spurious and illusionary resistance. I argue that in the early eighties certain extremely marginal forms of punk and pornography did in fact sustain opposition to the aesthetics of the hegemony and to commodity culture. Marking a survival of sixties' utopianism, these forms of erotic and music video (which I link but do not equate in the epithet "hardcore") constituted a survival of the project of the classic avant-garde—the turn of cultural practice against the status of art in bourgeois society as defined by the concept of autonomy and against the distribution apparatus bourgeois art depends on (Bürger, 1984: 22). Their demonstration of the cultural possibilities and also the limitations of the present is particularly sharp since the sixties American avant-garde film, arguably the most powerful oppositional art since World War II, was itself directly constructed upon a parallel documentation of illicit sexual and musical practices.

* * * * *

Simultaneously avant-garde and documentary in a way matched only by the early Soviet cinema, Underground Film emancipated itself from Hollywood by reproducing in the filmic the properties of the aberrant or proscribed sexual and musical practices that preoccupied the profilmic. The quasi-vérité documentation

of jazz musicians in films like *Shadows* and *Pull My Daisy* allowed improvisation, performative virtuosity, spontaneity, and the other compositional procedures of jazz to be enacted in film shooting and editing. Similarly, the transgressions of the codes of sexual representation that followed amateur documentation of domestic sexuality by, for example, Jack Smith, Stan Brakhage and Carolee Schneemann supplied the avant-garde's formal excess and "sterility" (Lyotard, 1978), the promiscuous visual surplus to the narrative economy of industrial features.

As the New Hollywood of the late sixties appropriated sanitized forms of these innovations, so the social and aesthetic transgression of their origins were absorbed by the culture generally. Afro-American guitarists replaced Afro-American saxophonists as the dominant influence on youth music, and the marginality of jazz gave way to the very different social dynamics of rock, which eventually became the single most important mechanism for incorporating youth dissidence. At the same time, explicit sexual representation, including a new spectacularization of the male body and more or less overt homosexual iconography (as for example in Sylvester Stallone's films), was thoroughly integrated into the entertainment and advertising industries.

While these assimilations of sixties recalcitrance do exemplify the postmodernist closure, nevertheless the industrial functions they sustain do not totally occupy the cultural field nor entirely pre-empt popular alternatives. During the same period, unincorporated minority video practices of musical and sexual documentary emerged—partially in reaction against them and partially negotiated in the space they have made available—which do figure resistance and perhaps even utopian alterity. In these, as in sixties avant-garde film, the formal qualities of the video-text and its social uses refract and elaborate the conditions of the music and sex they document, producing formal and operational differences from the hegemonic televisual modes. Their textual offensiveness mobilizes their challenge to both the entertainment industry and also the other institutions integrated with that industry, various journalistic and academic systems, including the one element in the post-modern hegemony that, while it has silently been speaking here, has not so far acknowledged itself: film theory.

While it may be argued that postmodern Theory sustains a form of Adornian negativity lost to art proper, it is equally plausible to regard it as a symptom of the very closures it purports to diagnose. The mutually sustaining philosophical, critical and journalistic discourses that have developed in the tow of post-structuralism and a revived Culture Criticism display a conceptual and terminological density, reminiscent of the "difficulty" of modern art, which marks their resistance to easy consumption. Yet, in the insatiable market for text, itself floated on increasingly "pure" information, these discourses themselves become commodities. Lacking any affiliation with working-class movements, they are easily institutionalized and assimilated into consumer society in general. The imbrication of allegedly radical art history in the world of corporate finance via the apparatus of museums and gallery-supported magazines is the most glittering form of this collusion; but other cultural writings have their own form of it, film criticism especially. And ever since high-modernist literature became undergraduate texts, the academy itself has been a prime agent in the construction of postmodern culture; we academics welcome a plethora of previously taboo practices with a broadmindedness that was not available to the sixties avant-gardes, certainly not to sixties film.

A crucial figuration of the incompatibility of the sixties' film and the academy is preserved in a *locus classicus* of the Underground innovations I have mentioned, Jonas Mekas's *Lost, Lost, Lost*. The crisis of this film (and we inherit it as the documentation of one of the half-dozen paradigmatic shifts in the practices of cinema) occurs when Mekas and Ken Jacobs take prints of *Flaming Creatures* and *Blonde Cobra* to the Flaherty Film Seminar at Brattleboro in 1963. These two films, previously recognized by Mekas in *Village Voice* articles as "impure, naughty and 'uncinematic'" (Mekas, 1972:95), films "without inhibitions, sexual or any other kind" (ibid.:86), are refused entry to the conference, and the cinephiles are obliged to spend the night outside in their cars. But next morning, as they shoot home-movies to document their exclusion from the seminar, Mekas discovers what will henceforward be his signature improvisational style, his own form of "blowing as per jazz musician" (Kerouac, 1958:72) in film, and returns to New York and to his life's work of creating

the institutions of an independent film culture.

Some 25 years later *Lost, Lost, Lost* is beginning to have a place in academic film criticism (though *Flaming Creatures* and *Blonde Cobra* do not). But given what is at stake in the film, this and similar instances of theory's openness to the avant-garde may be as discomforting to those of us who have most desired it as it is to those who have most resisted it, if for quite different reasons. If we understand the avant-garde as of social rather than merely formal importance, we must wonder whether this new legitimacy signals the evaporation of the very alterity to which we made our commitment. On the one hand we fear that the toleration of our enthusiasms indicates their historical supercession or only an illusory offensiveness that is in fact functional within the post-modern hegemony. On the other hand, we must ask, if indeed there were a video practice today as radically innovative as the Baudelairean cinema was in its time, could—or should—we be any more receptive than the Brattleboro seminar? Would we be able to see it? And if we could see it and talk about it, what would that imply?

Questions like this forewarn me that I should not be surprised if the search for the unsayable leads to the unspeakable.

The Best of Amateur Erotic Video Volume 11 is a compilation of four tapes, each 15–20 minutes long, self-photographed and self-produced by middle-class, heterosexual, white couples.[1] In three of them, the couples have intercourse, while in the other first the woman and then the man masturbates separately. Each section is prefixed by a title giving the participants' first names and an identification number, usually with some form of invitation; "Debra and Earl from California," for instance, request "correspondence from anyone viewing their tape." The tape as a whole and its separate sections are briefly introduced by an unseen woman speaking for "Susan's Video," the distributing agency. The tape is available by mail without charge in direct exchange for a tape of your own sexual activity for inclusion in future collections, though it may also be obtained by purchase.

As text, the compilation differs sharply from commodity pornography. Since the tape shamelessly proclaims erotic representation as its *raison d'être,* it is not obliged to disguise itself as either narrative or documentary. The sexual encounters are not motivated by spurious narrative intrigues; without a plot, there can be no assumption of character, no role-playing which would justify the sexual activity as the representation of the behavior, deviant or not, of some other persons. Nor, apart from the minimal introductions noted, are the sexual encounters or the video photography of them framed by any normative meta-discourse that would justify their introduction as anthropological data or evidence of pathology. As a consequence of this self-sufficiency, the tape displays a diegetic steadiness, quite unlike industrial pornography's ontological tensions between fiction and the sheer *vérité* presentation of sexual activity, and its parallel formal tensions between a propulsive narrative and the interludes of its retardation.

While recent technical advances in home-video equipment allow an image quality at least as good as that of the average sixties 16mm stag film, photography and editing are rudimentary and clearly nonprofessional, with a stationary camera and deep-focus long takes being the norm (though the woman's masturbation scene is shot by her partner with a very energetic hand-held camera that suggests a direct erotic interchange). There is little use of close-ups and no intra-sequential editing, no parallel montages between genital contact and the facial response shots which register its effect. The grammatical primitiveness of this uninflected, non-suturing style culminates in a signal absence of one of the most bizarre but nevertheless ubiquitous tropes of pornography, the close-up on the man's ejaculation and the organization of patterns of formal crisis and resolution around it. Finally where (except in very specifically bracketed situations) pornography effaces its own production, here the performers recognize and address the apparatus, frequently making eye contact with the camera or watching themselves on a monitor, and comment on the fact that photography is taking place.

Distinguishing the amateur erotic video from industrial pornography, these formal differences mark the tape's deficiencies in the latter's terms, its failure to provide intensely focussed visual eroticism or to generate a compelling play of excitement and frustration. I find it less arousing and so less desirable than its industrial counterpart. But they also trace substantial differences in the social relations that the tape

constructs and the activities it promotes, particularly as these re-align the priorities between the pleasures of sexual contact itself and those of its optical or technical mediation and social broadcast. (1) Where in pornography the performers' pleasure is subordinated to their instrumentality in commodity film production, here those pleasures are primary and themselves determine textual organization. (2) Where in pornography the implications of observation and the consequent pleasures of exhibitionism must be repressed, here they are foregrounded. (3) Where in pornography the sexual activity depicted is always categorically unavailable to the spectator—the price of scopophilic delight is the absolute impossibility of physical contact between the performers and the spectator—here the text proposes such contact; it proposes itself as the means to it and as the means to a social network of pleasure that includes but is not limited to looking.

Pornography demands that the actors sacrifice their pleasure to the procedures of film manufacture and to the text's manipulation of its future spectators' desire. The rhythm of copulation is interrupted by the requirements of the camera set-ups, the lighting apparatus, the shooting schedules and the other exigencies of production.[2] Indeed, the better the pornography, the more the actors' actual satisfaction is displaced into the most visually titillating display of it; the signs of sexual pleasure have a higher priority than the performance of it. Subordinating the somatic to the visual, and the experiential to the spectacular, the commodity function is thus inscribed in the photographic and editing conventions. Its demands are epitomized in the male's obligation to allow the camera to see his climax; at the point where his satisfaction would reach its fulfillment, he must withdraw; his need to make his orgasm visible obliges him to sacrifice its most pleasurable form. Some of this obligation to the filmic and the industrial tropes that accommodate it are present in the amateur tapes: the performer/photographers occasionally attempt genital close-ups and they do adjust their positions for the camera. But in general the tapes reflect the phases and drives of the performers' own activity in a less mediated way; pace and construction are dictated by their pleasure rather than by aesthetic and generic requirements or the spectators' needs, and in only one instance does the male withdraw to ejaculate; in fact Susan's guide for contributors specifically recommends that this be avoided (Meredith, 1982:83).

The performers' orientation around their own rather than the spectators' pleasure allows them both to acknowledge the apparatus and to engage the particular pleasures of exhibitionism and narcissism it allows. In pornography, which takes over the illusionist pretensions of the commercial feature film, self-consciousness is normally proscribed unless it is intradiegetically narrated in stories about film-making. Since the actors' market value depends on the conjunction of their actual unavailability to the spectator and the latter's imaginary encounter with them that the text affords, they may not admit that they are being observed by the camera, by the people on the set or by the future spectator. But since the purpose of the amateur tapes is to introduce—perhaps even physically—the performers to the spectators, bridging the division between producer and consumer that commodity culture depends on, the vehicle of their contact may be acknowledged. The different economies correspond to different psychological states: the voyeurism of pornography depends on concealed observation, while here the performers' self-consciousness allows them the pleasures of exhibitionism, of seeing themselves reflected back by the monitor or by the more extended gaze of the tape's social distribution. Their blatant self-display releases them from guilt and invites a similarly shameless gaze for the spectator, whose participation is implicit throughout (though it is especially clear in the woman's direct address to the camera in her masturbation scene). The acknowledged visual intercourse between performer and spectator allows the tape to figure the possibility of transcending the commodity relations of pornography by adding video to one's own erotic activity and by joining the tape network as a producer.

Thus, though the sexual activity is so conventionally that of the heterosexual couple that it appears to reinforce sexual conservativism, if not the nuclear family itself, the tape implies other, more properly promiscuous, scenes, not only the "kinkier" material that the voice-over introduction mentions as being available, but the expanded circuits of promiscuous sexual adventure. The tape's final function of sexual advertising, of making sexual pleasure more available rather than repressively channelling

desire into administered forms, marks then the limitations of any approach to it as representation; finally it cannot be evaluated apart from the sexual encounters it occasions,[3] even though the crucial phases in this process, the video-taping of domestic sex acts, is textually recorded.

What are the implications of introducing video into lovemaking? Initially my Luddite technophobia is checked by my inability to draw a logical line that would differentiate video from mirrors or just looking in the enhancement of erotic pleasure. But my discomfort at this mechanization of vision—my fear that sooner or later sex without Sony won't do it any more and that this is only a last and hyperbolic instance of a culturally pandemic supplantation of the real by the simulacrum—reads it as a final step in the internalization of the ubiquitous apparatus of surveillance. As a form of autosurveillance, it completes the *industrialization* of the body, continuous with the total penetration of the spectacle and the corporation, the *incorporation* of desire itself.

These ambiguities are the ambiguities of the apparatus and so those of video in general, and they register an important difference between the epochs of film and television. Though home-movie equipment was available as early as the 1920s, the medium's development almost exclusively as an industry allowed the sixties avant-garde to be understood correctly as a *liberation* of the apparatus; conversely the alternative systems of distribution—the alternative cinemas—of the sixties were dogged by the cost of film and the unwieldiness of the machines (dependence on labs, the bulkiness and fragility of projectors). But video's popular availability, its cheapness and its ease of reproduction, means that the subcultural self-representation and the extra-industrial circulation of representations that the sixties political cinemas could only dream of are now realizable. Nothing prevents us from shedding corporate aesthetics by becoming producers rather than consumers of television except the residual prejudices of commodity art production and the internalization of industrial production values. Over the past ten or so years, this internalization has resulted in so-called artist's video, as the form of appearance of its own assimilation, fetishizing industrial-quality image manipulation. In this context, rejection of such values with willful *video brut* can inscribe a more general ideological rejection, as indeed in its early years artists' video defined itself against broadcast television in a negative aesthetic, partially derived from structural film's critique of the illusionism of the commerical feature. This negativity disappeared from film and television practices of all kinds as its social preconditions evaporated in the mid-seventies; but the same aesthetic model revived almost immediately in the field of music as the axiom of punk.

Since one of punk's determining strategies was its deliberately rude infraction of aesthetic and social norms, the use of the terminology of the obscene and the illicit was entirely logical; the onomastic continuity of the term "hardcore" recalls early punk's use of bondage and fetish iconography, the use of pornographic films in punk concerts, the use of punk iconography in industrial pornography (e.g., *New Wave Hookers*), and more recently, certain pornographic films made within the punk subcultures (e.g., those of Richard Kern). More precisely, "hardcore" was a purist style of the music developed initially in Washington, DC, and Southern California in the early eighties. This, the music's essential, its "classical," mode, mounted a deliberately anachronistic attempt to sustain early punk's negativity against its diffusion and assimilation by the music industry as various forms of new wave. The entirely recalcitrant music provided a besieged subculture with the basis for defensive rituals in which the sonic (and other forms of) violence and the obstinate antiprofessionalism that signalled rejection of overproduced corporate rock also informed strategies of negation and antigrammaticality for everyday self-presentation and the other cultural practices. Crucial in these intertwined social and aesthetic developments were fanzines, largely reader-written magazines which provided musical information and social exchanges of all kinds. Contributing not just to the documentation of the subculture, but also to its formation and dissemination, fanzines provided a participatory forum, necessary as a defense against misrepresentation in the establishment media and against regular police rioting.

The most important fanzine in Southern California was *Flipside,* established in 1977, which in 1984 began to distribute compilations of concert footage as *Flipside Video Fanzines.* Number Nine, "When Can I Sleep In Peace,"[4] for example, has 19 cuts by 11 commercially unprofitable bands, none of whom had corporate

recording contracts. The songs all employ a brutally reductionist and visceral musical style, whose masculinist values are summarized in the priorities, "Faster, Louder, Shorter." When they are intelligible, the equally aggressive, blatantly agitational lyrics blast the religious right, the military-industrial complex, the government and the police, making explicit a categorical opposition to the corporate state; their ideological field is announced in the songs' titles: MDC sing "Corporate Death Burger" and "Church and State"; the Dicks sing "Sidewalk Begging," "Hate the Police" and "No War"; the Dead Kennedys sing "Moral Majority" and "Chemical Warfare"; BGK sings "Vivisection" and "Arms Race"; and Conflict sings "From Protest to Resistance."

Like the music, the videos flaunt scorched-earth production values. Featuring live, unenhanced sound, they are shot in 1/2" with home cameras that lack color adjustment so that the light is not balanced and the color not always correctly keyed. They consist of rudimentary edits of footage shot at concerts simultaneously by two cameras, one placed among the audience fronting the stage, the other shooting from the side of the stage to include both performers and audience together within the frame. They contain no image manipulation, close-ups, or special effects except for the occasional superimposition of synchronous footage from the camera covering the band and that covering the audience; this trope has great symbolic weight since it figures the ritual passage of the audience over the stage and their contestation of the band's position on it and reproduces the breakdown of the distinction between audience and band that is central to punk's alterity to corporate culture. The tape does contain some other material; it opens with a crude collage of television commercials and news violence (a juxtaposition which summarizes the music's attack on consumerism and state violence) and some songs are illustrated with simple cutaways; accompanying the Dicks' "Sidewalk Begging" are shots of the homeless, while the photography of BGK's "Vivisection" is interpolated with anti-vivisectionist publicity stills. Otherwise, the tape is as raw as the music itself.

The tapes are not collectively produced and they are sold, and so in respect to the social relations their consumption mobilizes they are less radical an intervention than the erotic videos. But the commodity relations they generate are minimized; they are very cheap, costing little more than enough to return production costs and allow further compilations. Production is anonymous and since no individual authorship is announced, the art-work remains within the subculture as its autonomous self-representation and self-expression. Produced and consumed entirely within the subculture, it promotes a radically amateur aesthetic that refuses the industrial distinction between artist and market. As far as the material conditions of the medium allow, then, the fanzine reproduces in video the negative determination and positive strategies of hardcore music as well as its aesthetic and social values; denying the consensus and refusing the socialization which industrial culture merchandizes, it resists corporate assimilation and so preserves a space for social alterity.

As they document and sustain the music's resistance to the commercial functions of new wave, hardcore video fanzines define themselves generally against the panoply of corporate film and television appropriations of popular music, and specifically against the two primary forms of that appropriation: music videos in their summary form of MTV, and feature films about punk, including ostensibly sympathetic documentaries. These industrial forms of the music correspond respectively to what Dick Hebdige noted as the two forms of recuperation of punk in general: music videos to "the conversion of subcultural signs . . . into mass-produced objects (i.e., the commodity form)" and the documentaries to "the 'labelling' and redefinition of deviant behavior by dominant groups—the police, the media, the judiciary (i.e., the ideological form)" (Hebdige, 1979:94).

Music videos' internalization of the values of industrial culture is evidenced in the correspondences between their grammar and that of television commercials, their recurrence to the most insipid and unchallenging pleasures, their exploitation of sexual stereotypes, and their flaunting of extremely expensive production values in both *mise-en-scène* and special effects. The best of the documentary films (such as Penelope Spheeris's *Decline of Western Civilization* and Lech Kowalski's *D.O.A.*, both of 1980) may be closer to the subcultures; but their mass culture function of re-presenting punk culture to the

general public obliges them to frame the others' discourse in their own. The various interview techniques establish a hierarchy of discourses in which the normativity of the film's own interpellates punk's as deviant. A summary instance of such framing, which is inevitably even more grotesque as it is narrated in mainstream Hollywood films, is the Bad Brains sequence in Scorsese's *After Hours* (1985). While this is one of the few occasions in which anything like hardcore's intensity was captured on film, the narrative denigrates the performance as aberrant, a bizarre miasma in a nightmare of irrationality.

In contradistinction to these, respectively the appropriation and the containment of punk, *Flipside Video Fanzine* places itself within the culture, sustaining and ratifying it from inside. Celebrating and enacting the aesthetic of punk music, it rejects any reconciliation with the industrial media or with the ethics of the corporate state of which those media are an integral part. This larger political contestation, implicit in the tape's form and made possible by the mode of its production, is clearly articulated in the songs' lyrics. The singer directly addresses the audience as a commonality, unified in their defiance of state militarism, and, as noted, the songs explicitly reject the domestic and foreign policies of the Reagan administration. Though all their ideas must be expressed negatively (for the aesthetic system does not allow affirmation), the songs give voice to contestation with a clarity and vehemence such as has rarely been found in American culture since the thirties. This opposition to the corporate state is most focussed where its violence is most immediately experienced, in the local police.[5]

For example, in the introduction to the Dicks' "Hate the Police" the vocalist spells out a crude syllogism; the next song, he tells the audience, "makes you a fucking Dick" because "Dicks hate the police." The outrageous puns spin language, sexuality, and the law into Möbius strips of irony: only those who lack the phallus may be the phallus or, taking the pun on "dick" in the opposite direction, only those who hate the police can be the police. As he launches into his song, warning the police to stay clear of him because he has a gun, general slamdancing mayhem among those of the audience who share his logic and recognize themselves as Dicks ensues. The next clip is from MDC, a polysemous acronym variously elaborated as "Millions of Dead Cops," "Millions of Dead Children" or "Multi-Death Corporation." It begins with the singer chanting "Dead Cops" and grasping his crotch as he mimes pissing on the cops' graves. His song, "Blue By Day," is a vitriolic attack on multinationals, and on "all the stinking rich people" who "run the police departments" and "start all the wars." The indictment of state terrorism galvanizes the audience, precipitating a frenzied but thoroughly eloquent ritual in which they climb on the stage, struggle briefly with the stagehands, perhaps share the microphone for a chorus, and then somersault back into the crowd.

Their logic is sublime: struggle violently to achieve a place in the spectacle, dance briefly in its glare, and then dive out of it, all the while celebrating resistance to authority of all kinds. But to those who are outside the subculture—those perhaps who enjoy "good" TV like "Hill Street Blues" and "Cagney and Lacey" that legitimizes state violence by representing its agents as neurotic bourgeois subjects besieged by "criminals" and the problems of "life"—to these the tape will appear as infantile and regressive as the performances it documents.

Since everywhere in postmodern culture regression is exploited for that frisson of the forbidden which creates an appearance of resistance while in fact renewing consumption, it is especially necessary that merely collusive forms of it be distinguished from others that are not reducible to corporate uses. In industrial culture, a "repressive tolerance" administers regression, channelling it to serve state interests by framing it in equally administered ideological structures (the *Rambo* films again or nubile preteenagers in advertising.) But both the domestic erotica and the punk concert tapes do not so easily allow for vicarious or touristically secure visitation, and indeed retain a truly minatory edge to their attraction. Their threat is partly a semiological consequence of their difference from ordinary documentary, which always presents its content, its profilmic, as a curiosity different from and other than itself. But these tapes refuse that difference; the various forms of identity—ideological, environmental, functional—between the video-text and the events it records tends to collapse the signifier into the signified, the text into its context. Consequently, in both cases, one's response to the tape as artwork is overwhelmingly determined by one's

assessment of the social events it depicts and incites. Since this content is unlawful, for those outside the tight subcultural circle (in which the producers and consumers are largely the same) the tapes themselves can be approved only at the cost of a double apostasy, a rejection of dominant social mores and of dominant media. Endorsing the renegades depicted or recognizing any kinship with them, which is virtually a prerequisite to liking the tapes, also commits you to a video aesthetic whose primary axiom, its *raison d'être* even, is rejection of all other regimes of television—a position which puts in crisis the discursive practices of the dominant socio-aesthetic system. And so commentary on them becomes difficult. If you don't like them, you will abruptly dismiss them as pathological. But if you do like them, especially if you *really* like them, you will be moved not to words but to action, to fucking or slamdancing. The difficulty proposed to humanist discourse, however vertiginous, is not unprecedented in cinema.

The issue has best been approached in psychoanalytic terms by Christian Metz. If cinema's pleasures are intrinsically those of the imaginary, then the theoretician's work in the symbolic, the work of distinguishing the symbolic from the imaginary, is always in danger of being "swallowed up" by the imaginary—the sliding of the *"discourse about the object"* into its opposite, the *"discourse of the object"* (Metz, 1982:5). This attraction is specifically (though surely not exclusively) a filmic one; but if its basis is in the constitutive Oedipality of the cinematic signifier (ibid.: 64), how much greater must it be in texts which engage the sexual drives so directly, without sublimation.[6] Such is the case with these, with their massive affective overload, their overt pandering to the desire to see and the desire to hear. Do the erotic videos fulfill cinema by showing us the primal scene itself instead of that allegory of it which is the reference of all other films (films which it thereby violates, invalidates and renders redundant); or do they destroy cinema by abrogating the voyeuristic precondition of such films, "a pure onlooker whose participation is inconceivable" (ibid.:64)? Similarly, is the nihilistic utopianism of hardcore—a primal scream to the other's primal scene—one that destroys music or a Dionysiac apotheosis of it? Until we have a psychoanalysis of television[7] or punk or pornography, we won't know.

But the issue is also political. The resistance these tapes propose to theory only reiterates their resistance to theory's privileged objects—bourgeois culture. As the contemporary avant-garde film has come to resemble nothing so much as broadcast television (Arthur, 1987:69), as artists' video looks more and more like broadcast television, as theory becomes a circuit in the global economy of television, whatever defines itself as *not-television* can only be talked about in reservations within (or outside) sanctioned discourse, as a rupture in its syntax. If theory can think it, it will only be (as in Jameson's remark) parenthetically.

NOTES

1. For the availability of this and other such tapes, see Meredith (1982). Similar material, which is sometimes advertised in magazines devoted to X-rated video, is referenced in Eder (1968).
2. For a humorous account of the stress of these demands on the pornographic film actor, see Gray (1985).
3. The possibility of imagining such a utopian promiscuity is, of course, severely circumscribed by external conditions; in this case, what developments in birth control in the late sixties made possible was abruptly terminated in the mid-eighties by AIDS.
4. *Flipside Video Fanzines* are available from PO Box 363, Whittier, California 90608. For a subsequent similar project, see *Suburban Relapse Fanzine,* POB 404825, Brooklyn, New York 11240. For an overview of punk fanzines in Los Angeles, see James (1984). For accounts of punk film-making, see Boddy (1981) and Buchsbaum (1981).
5. The violence of the Los Angeles Police Department is widely documented; see, for example, McCartney (1983) and Stark (1986). A collection of mid-eighties' anti-police songs from Southern California was assembled as *The Sound of Hollywood: 3: Copulation* (Mystic Records, MLP 33128).
6. In their fundamental narcissism, their greater emphasis on the profilmic event and less on its subsequent observation by the spectator, these tapes document extreme instances of the first two components (*Partialtrieb*) within the sex instinct, the desire of making oneself seen and the desire of making oneself heard. Lacan (1977: 194–95) proposes that in the former the subject *"looks at himself [sic] . . . in his erotic member"* and that this delight is the "root" of the scopic drive as a whole.
7. This project has, however, been initiated in Houston (1984).

LIST OF WORKS CITED

ARTHUR, Paul. (1987) "Last of the Machine: Avant-garde Film since 1965." *Millennium Film Journal* (16/17/18 (Fall/Winter 1986/87): 69–93.

BODDY, William. (1981) "New York Confidential: An Interview with Eric Mitchell." *Millennium Film Journal,* 7/8/9, 27–36.

BUCHSBAUM, Jonathan. (1981) "A La Recherche des Punks Perdus." *Film Comment,* (May), 43–46.

BÜRGER, Peter. (1984) *Theory of the Avant-Garde.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

EDER, Bruce (1986) "Mail-order Video." *Village Voice,* 16 December, 57–58.

GRAY, Spalding. (1985) "The Farmers' Daughter." *Wild History.* Ed. Richard Prince, New York: Tanam Press.
HEBDIGE, Dick. (1979? *Subculture: The Meaning of Style.* New York: Methuen.
HOUSTON, Beverle. (1984) "Reviewing Television: The Metapsychology of Endless Consumption." *Quarterly Review of Film Studies,* 9, 3, 183-95.
JAMES, David. (1984) "Poetry/Punk/Production: Some Recent Writing in L.A." *The Minnesota Review,* N.S. 23 (Fall 1984), 127-53.
JAMESON, Fredric. (1984) "Periodizing the 60s." *The Sixties Without Apology.* Ed. Sohnya Sayres et al., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
KEROUAC, Jack. (1958) "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose." *Evergreen Review* 2, 5 (Summer 1958) 72-73.
LACAN. Jacques. (1977) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis.* London: Hogarth Press.
LYOTARD, Jean-François. (1978) "Acinema." *Wide Angle* 2,3: 52-59.
MCCARTNEY, Patrick. (1973) "Cops and Punks." *L.A. Weekly,* 5, 47 (21 October), 18-21.
MEKAS, Jonas. (1972) *Movie Journal: The Rise of a New American Cinema.* New York: Collier.
MEREDITH, Raina. (1982) "The (Amateur) Shtup Tapes." *Village Voice,* 23 November 1982, 82-83.
METZ, Christian. (1982) *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and Cinema.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
STARK, Annette. (1986) "There's a Riot Going On." *Spin,* 2, 9 (December), 68-74.

Reviews

ROSA LUXEMBURG

Director: Margarethe von Trotta. Script: Von Trotta. Producer: Eberhard Junkersdorf. Photography: Franz Rath. Music: Nicholas Economou. New Yorker Films.

Margarethe von Trotta's early work, particularly *The Second Awakening of Christa Klages* and *Marianne and Julianne,* drew startlingly effective parallels between personal anguish and political militancy, without reducing social activism to a series of psychological quirks. This alternation between the immediacy of the private realm and public discourse reflected important currents in feminist theory: "Once people do connect deeply felt personal problems to larger political structures, they often go on to make political sense out of the whole society rather quickly. This is not merely hypothetical; many women in the last decade moved rapidly from complaints about sexual relationships to feminism to socialism."[1] Von Trotta's narratives mingled the micropolitics of concerns such as child care and sexuality with an analysis of the German New Left's attempt to extricate itself from the excesses of terrorism that avoided the cliches of conservative Kulturkritik.

At first glance, Rosa Luxemburg seems to be a figure tailor-made for a director of Von Trotta's disposition. Luxemburg was a revolutionary socialist of rare analytic prowess with a rich personal life. Yet Luxemburg's complex and frequently contradictory life is not particularly amenable to the linear demands of film biography. She was one of the revolutionary left's most anomalous figures: a Marxist who refused to capitulate to Leninism, a militant woman who evinced little interest in feminism, a Jew who was rarely preoccupied with anti-Semitism, and a Pole who was severely critical of her compatriots' characteristic nationalism. This fascinating admixture of heroic heterodoxy and occasional wrongheadedness should have provided the impetus for a compelling film, but von Trotta's chronicle of Luxemburg's later years is disappointingly bland. Although this hagiographic "bio-pic" is scrupulously accurate in terms of historical detail—the result of meticulous research—*Rosa Luxemburg* is a misguided homage that, however inadvertently, dilutes the legacy of the woman it attempts to enshrine.

The source of this dilution can be traced to von Trotta's peculiar narrative strategy. Employing a more sophisticated version of narrative schemas cherished by Hollywood since the heyday of *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet,* she is loath to include any sequence featuring Rosa Luxemburg's public or political pronouncements without following it with a sequence that highlights her personal or interior life. While this approach might be defensible as a salutary reflection of contemporary feminism's emphasis on the ways

GRAY, Spalding. (1985) "The Farmers' Daughter." *Wild History.* Ed. Richard Prince, New York: Tanam Press.
HEBDIGE, Dick. (1979? *Subculture: The Meaning of Style.* New York: Methuen.
HOUSTON, Beverle. (1984) "Reviewing Television: The Metapsychology of Endless Consumption." *Quarterly Review of Film Studies,* 9, 3, 183-95.
JAMES, David. (1984) "Poetry/Punk/Production: Some Recent Writing in L.A." *The Minnesota Review,* N.S. 23 (Fall 1984), 127-53.
JAMESON, Fredric. (1984) "Periodizing the 60s." *The Sixties Without Apology.* Ed. Sohnya Sayres et al., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
KEROUAC, Jack. (1958) "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose." *Evergreen Review* 2, 5 (Summer 1958) 72-73.
LACAN. Jacques. (1977) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis.* London: Hogarth Press.
LYOTARD, Jean-François. (1978) "Acinema." *Wide Angle* 2,3: 52-59.
MCCARTNEY, Patrick. (1973) "Cops and Punks." *L.A. Weekly,* 5, 47 (21 October), 18-21.
MEKAS, Jonas. (1972) *Movie Journal: The Rise of a New American Cinema.* New York: Collier.
MEREDITH, Raina. (1982) "The (Amateur) Shtup Tapes." *Village Voice,* 23 November 1982, 82-83.
METZ, Christian. (1982) *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and Cinema.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
STARK, Annette. (1986) "There's a Riot Going On." *Spin,* 2, 9 (December), 68-74.

Reviews

ROSA LUXEMBURG

Director: Margarethe von Trotta. Script: Von Trotta. Producer: Eberhard Junkersdorf. Photography: Franz Rath. Music: Nicholas Economou. New Yorker Films.

Margarethe von Trotta's early work, particularly *The Second Awakening of Christa Klages* and *Marianne and Julianne,* drew startlingly effective parallels between personal anguish and political militancy, without reducing social activism to a series of psychological quirks. This alternation between the immediacy of the private realm and public discourse reflected important currents in feminist theory: "Once people do connect deeply felt personal problems to larger political structures, they often go on to make political sense out of the whole society rather quickly. This is not merely hypothetical; many women in the last decade moved rapidly from complaints about sexual relationships to feminism to socialism."[1] Von Trotta's narratives mingled the micropolitics of concerns such as child care and sexuality with an analysis of the German New Left's attempt to extricate itself from the excesses of terrorism that avoided the cliches of conservative Kulturkritik.

At first glance, Rosa Luxemburg seems to be a figure tailor-made for a director of Von Trotta's disposition. Luxemburg was a revolutionary socialist of rare analytic prowess with a rich personal life. Yet Luxemburg's complex and frequently contradictory life is not particularly amenable to the linear demands of film biography. She was one of the revolutionary left's most anomalous figures: a Marxist who refused to capitulate to Leninism, a militant woman who evinced little interest in feminism, a Jew who was rarely preoccupied with anti-Semitism, and a Pole who was severely critical of her compatriots' characteristic nationalism. This fascinating admixture of heroic heterodoxy and occasional wrongheadedness should have provided the impetus for a compelling film, but von Trotta's chronicle of Luxemburg's later years is disappointingly bland. Although this hagiographic "bio-pic" is scrupulously accurate in terms of historical detail—the result of meticulous research—*Rosa Luxemburg* is a misguided homage that, however inadvertently, dilutes the legacy of the woman it attempts to enshrine.

The source of this dilution can be traced to von Trotta's peculiar narrative strategy. Employing a more sophisticated version of narrative schemas cherished by Hollywood since the heyday of *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet,* she is loath to include any sequence featuring Rosa Luxemburg's public or political pronouncements without following it with a sequence that highlights her personal or interior life. While this approach might be defensible as a salutary reflection of contemporary feminism's emphasis on the ways

in which the "personal" becomes embedded in the realm of the political, problems arise because of the relentless sentimentality of von Trotta's treatment. Unlike the stereotypical socialist militant, Rosa Luxemburg cherished her inner life with a relish that equalled the vigor of her public pronouncements. A recent biographer notes that she scolded her lover, Leo Jogiches, for writing her of "nothing but the worker's cause."[2] Unfortunately, von Trotta's focus in this film tends to bathe Luxemburg in a romantic glow in which the devotee of Heine and Beethoven emerges as a rather static figure instead of a dynamic agent of transformation. It is certainly valid to attempt to redress the balance of a legacy of patriarchal history, in which only the instrumentality of the public domain is given credence. Yet the conventionality of von Trotta's style in effect abandons the intensity and incisiveness of her earlier work.

A contrived oscillation between the public and private realms (instead of a dialectical portrayal of the two spheres' interrelationship) inflects von Trotta's narrative dynamic from the film's opening to its inevitable tragic conclusion. The film commences with a long shot of an encampment of soldiers guarding the prison where Luxemburg was incarcerated during World War I, and is immediately followed by a medium shot of the heroine writing to her friend Luise Kautsky, the wife of her frequent rival, the reformist social democrat Karl Kautsky. These establishing shots soon dissolve into a flashback sequence in which a young Rosa is depicted as a sensitive child who awaits the blooming of spring flowers with eager anticipation. This capsule biography of an incipient botanist—and Rosa Luxemburg was indeed interested in botany and zoology during her university years—is followed by a cut which catapults the viewer back to the brutal realities of prison life, as a blindfolded Rosa is readied for interrogation. This narrative progression delineates the nature of the film's ideological cul-de-sac. Rosa Luxemburg's historical importance is reduced to the emblematic role of martyr, while her political and theoretical differences with Karl Kautsky are glossed over in favor of Luxemburg's relatively apolitical friendship with his wife. In von Trotta's earlier films, depictions of female solidarity possessed both personal and political resonance. Nonetheless, since overtly political topics were of minimal importance to Luise and Rosa, their friendship can only appear disconcertingly superficial. The intensity of the camaraderie of Marianne and Julianne has a feeble corollary in this film in a sequence in which Luise and Rosa recall their student days in Zurich during a languorous boating trip. Even Rosa's interest in the natural world is trivialized; J. P. Nettl observes that Luxemburg had a "genuine feeling for the beauty and unreason of plant and animal life; she was not just the deep-breathing romantic nature-lover depicted by some of her biographers."[3]

It certainly appears to have been von Trotta's goal to offer a lyrical re-interpretation of Rosa Luxemburg's life, one that would offer her fervor as a model of struggle that we might well emulate. This thoroughly commendable effort to suggest Luxemburg as an emancipatory paragon (and paradigm) becomes mired in a self-defeating form of veneration. The flaws of this romanticization are evident in the film's didactic ploy of incorporating noteworthy chunks of Luxemburg's speeches, diaries, and letters into the film's dialogue and voice-over in a manner that is invariably literal-minded and heavy-handed. For example, Luxemburg's ironic observation that she and Clara Zetkin (the leader of the SPD's women's division) should be regarded as "the last two real men of social democracy" is rather clumsily integrated into a protracted sequence in which party tactics are under discussion. While it might be expected that von Trotta, as a contemporary feminist, would distance herself from this anachronistic assertion, its casual inclusion as a line of dialogue points to von Trotta's rather baffling unwillingness to temper her admiration with any sort of reflexive critique. Similarly, Luxemburg's famous empathy for the plight of a water buffalo, whose cruel torture she witnesses while in prison, is intoned as a voice-over while dirge-like music booms on the sound track and close-ups of barbed wire flash by. Within its original context, the compassion for a beleaguered animal was part of a far-ranging letter to Sonja Liebknecht in which Goethe, Stefan George, and materialism are also discussed. It should be clear that, for Luxemburg, sentiment and analysis were not antithetical categories (as Nettl observes, "the idea of having to choose between the woman of the red revolution and the woman of the pink window boxes is ludicrous

and arbitrary''),[4] and it is certainly valid for von Trotta to emphasize Luxemburg's private reveries. Nonetheless, her attempt to incorporate Luxemburg's private observations into a seamless biographical narrative leads, disappointingly, to the imposition of an inexorable ''identification'' with a heroine. This stratagem seems ironic in light of the fact that Rosa Luxemburg fervently agreed with the First International's belief that ''the emancipation of the working classes can only be achieved by the working classes themselves.'' Within the contradictions of this narrative, however, Rosa Luxemburg becomes an object of adulation rather than a catalyst for change and reflection.

On the other hand, von Trotta's chronicle of Luxemburg's public activities suffers from a similar strain of narrative malaise. Numerous long-shots of Luxemburg speaking in public depict her as a sort of demi-god, and a sequence in which we are introduced to the major luminaries of the SPD at a New Year's Eve ball achieves an unintentionally humorous tone, since the general effect is that of a socialist rendition of *The Great Waltz.* The audience becomes lost in a thicket of Bernsteins, Bebels, and Liebknechts, with only the unerring image of the heroine to guide them through the confusion.

Ironically enough, these treacly stylistic flourishes seem to have been inspired by von Trotta's desire to render Rosa Luxemburg ''our contemporary.'' In the process, Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht's highly influential advocacy of the mass strike and popular democracy is almost entirely ignored, while the nuances of Rosa Luxemburg's domestic strife are given priority. Her long-time lover and political associate, Leo Jogiches, is given a particularly saccharine speech, in which he hectors Rosa with an exhortation that would not be out of place in a Hollywood melodrama such as *The Turning Point:* ''Rosa, you have to choose: mother or revolutionary. . . . Your task is to give birth to ideas, not children.'' Many of these domestic interludes are accompanied by Nicholas Economou's vapid musical score which might be described as Mahler on Valium. While von Trotta's ostensible intention was to portray the human struggle of the century's most notable woman Marxist, this sort of well-meaning humanism does not succeed in illuminating her contributions for a generation for whom Rosa Luxemburg is merely a name. In addition, it is certainly misleading to attempt to recast Rosa Luxemburg in the mould of a contemporary feminist, for whom questions of women's emancipation are relatively autonomous, not inextricable. While it might be pleasant from our vantage point to believe that Luxemburg shared an ethic of ''consciousness-raising'' that is roughly analogous to recent developments in the women's movement, a cursory look at her writings helps to locate that belief as mere wish-fulfillment. In a key essay on the struggle for women's suffrage, Luxemburg observes that ''the current mass struggle for women's political rights is only an expression and a part of the proletariat's general struggle for liberation.''[5] These sentiments might seem reductive in the light of recent feminist theory (despite the fact that, on most issues, Rosa Luxemburg was the most subtle and least reductive of Marxists), but they reflect views that were widely held by leftists of both sexes during this period. If von Trotta had wanted to reexamine a historical figure who actively embraced both political militancy and feminist consciousness, she might have chosen Emma Goldman, since Goldman unquestionably had a more contemporaneous view of the relationship between public struggle and personal transformation.[6]

ROSA LUXEMBURG: *David Olbrychski, Barbara Sukowa*

Ironies also abound in the fact that Rosa Luxemburg's greatest contribution to the Marxist tradition—an espousal of a libertarian ethos that stresses the ''spontaneity'' of the masses rather than the machinations of a revolutionary vanguard—is virtually ignored, and instead a ''great woman theory of history''[7] is unapologetically put forth. It is symptomatic of the current impoverishment of historical memory that the word ''libertarian'' has come only to connote the reactionary free-market ideology of

the US Libertarian Party, rather than the anti-authoritarian, decentralized socialism of Reclus, Luxemburg, and Korsch which first inspired this coinage. The debt of dissident radicals such as the council communists—and, despite some historical paradoxes, the Polish Solidarity movement—to Rosa Luxemburg's libertarian Marxism is enormous, but an uninformed viewer of this film would come away with the impression that Luxemburg was a garden-variety socialist who stormed the barricades with aplomb and had some noble pacifist views. It is true that von Trotta has Luxemburg complain to Kautsky that she is "sick" of his parliamentarianism, but this negative appraisal does little to remind the viewer of the positive content of her own theory, a body of work that remains largely overlooked despite this cinematic canonization.

In view of the current stagnation of the German left, it is perhaps not surprising that von Trotta devotes such a considerable amount of screen time to the failure of the German Revolution of 1919 and Luxemburg's brutal death at the hands of the Freikorps. Yet this preoccupation is part of the film's overall fetishization of personality and neglect of process. A heavily personal orientation worked well for von Trotta in *Marianne and Julianne,* since the terrorist mentality the film dissected with dispassionate skill was itself the product of personal anguish rather than political acumen. While it would be foolish to expect a director such as von Trotta to repress her obvious strengths and emulate arid, and not wholly successful, stabs at materialist cinema such as *Wind from the East,* it is remarkable that *Rosa Luxemburg* remains so oblivious to the contradictions of its own narrative mechanisms. Von Trotta's conviction that, in the study of "historical personalities . . . private life is as politically important as public life"[8] is certainly not unreasonable, but can an investigation of Leo Jogiches's infidelities and Rosa's pained reaction truly illuminate Luxemburg's historical significance?

In terms of film style, *Rosa Luxemburg* suffers from a kind of constipated solemnity. Franz Rath's excellent sepia-toned cinematography reflects the film's unassailable earnestness, but it is this very earnestness which undermines the film's aesthetic potential. Barbara Sukowa's award-winning performance (best actress at Cannes) is unquestionably intelligent and sincere, but its very restraint is a reflection of the film's rather infuriating civility and good taste. She succeeds in miming Luxemburg's limp for most of the film, but her occasional tendency to dispense with this affliction only reminds us of the limitations of biographical realism. Nonetheless, despite all of the film's shortcomings, it will obviously compel many people to return to Luxemburg's impassioned and unusually erudite political prose.

—RICHARD PORTON

NOTES

1. Linda Gordon, quoted in Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright, *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism* (Boston: Allison Publications, 1979), 192.
2. Luxemburg is quoted in the introduction to Elzbieta Ettinger, ed., *Comrade and Lover, Rosa Luxemburg's Letters to Leo Jogiches* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1979), XV; see also Elzbieta Ettinger, *Rosa Luxemburg: A Life* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).
3. J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg,* abridged edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 41.
4. J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg,* 2 vols., London 1966, vol. 1, p. 14.
5. "Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle," anthologized in Dick Howard, ed., *Selected Political Writings: Rosa Luxemburg* (New York: Monthly Review Press), p. 222.
6. See the essays on feminism in Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and other Essays* (New York: Dover, 1969).
7. Karen Jaehne and Lenny Rubenstein, "A Great Woman Theory of History: An Interview with Margarethe von Trotta," *Cineaste,* Vol. XV, No. 4, 1987.
8. *Ibid.,* p. 26.

LOVE STREAMS

Directed by John Cassavetes. Screenplay by Cassavetes and Ted Allan. Based on the play by Allan. Photography: Al Ruban. Music: Bo Harwood. Editing: George Villasenor. Cannon.

Love Streams has the freewheeling emotional sprawl that is a hallmark of Cassavetes's films, and it has some familiar faces from his previous work (Gena Rowlands, Cassavetes himself, Seymour Cassel). But this remarkable study of sprung marriages and temporary couplings also has a richly precarious balance and a fullness of perspective that perhaps no other Cassavetes film has had. That combination, in turn, seems to come both from a quirky elegance of *mise en scène* that is relatively new in the director's movies and from a dark, knowing comic ease which is perhaps unprecedented in his film work and which seems to realign the gender conflicts that sometimes clogged the earlier films.

It begins with a dishevelled-looking fellow (Cassavetes) in a tuxedo entering a house which seems to be his, and calmly and repeatedly in-

the US Libertarian Party, rather than the anti-authoritarian, decentralized socialism of Reclus, Luxemburg, and Korsch which first inspired this coinage. The debt of dissident radicals such as the council communists—and, despite some historical paradoxes, the Polish Solidarity movement—to Rosa Luxemburg's libertarian Marxism is enormous, but an uninformed viewer of this film would come away with the impression that Luxemburg was a garden-variety socialist who stormed the barricades with aplomb and had some noble pacifist views. It is true that von Trotta has Luxemburg complain to Kautsky that she is "sick" of his parliamentarianism, but this negative appraisal does little to remind the viewer of the positive content of her own theory, a body of work that remains largely overlooked despite this cinematic canonization.

In view of the current stagnation of the German left, it is perhaps not surprising that von Trotta devotes such a considerable amount of screen time to the failure of the German Revolution of 1919 and Luxemburg's brutal death at the hands of the Freikorps. Yet this preoccupation is part of the film's overall fetishization of personality and neglect of process. A heavily personal orientation worked well for von Trotta in *Marianne and Julianne,* since the terrorist mentality the film dissected with dispassionate skill was itself the product of personal anguish rather than political acumen. While it would be foolish to expect a director such as von Trotta to repress her obvious strengths and emulate arid, and not wholly successful, stabs at materialist cinema such as *Wind from the East,* it is remarkable that *Rosa Luxemburg* remains so oblivious to the contradictions of its own narrative mechanisms. Von Trotta's conviction that, in the study of "historical personalities . . . private life is as politically important as public life"[8] is certainly not unreasonable, but can an investigation of Leo Jogiches's infidelities and Rosa's pained reaction truly illuminate Luxemburg's historical significance?

In terms of film style, *Rosa Luxemburg* suffers from a kind of constipated solemnity. Franz Rath's excellent sepia-toned cinematography reflects the film's unassailable earnestness, but it is this very earnestness which undermines the film's aesthetic potential. Barbara Sukowa's award-winning performance (best actress at Cannes) is unquestionably intelligent and sincere, but its very restraint is a reflection of the film's rather infuriating civility and good taste. She succeeds in miming Luxemburg's limp for most of the film, but her occasional tendency to dispense with this affliction only reminds us of the limitations of biographical realism. Nonetheless, despite all of the film's shortcomings, it will obviously compel many people to return to Luxemburg's impassioned and unusually erudite political prose.

—RICHARD PORTON

NOTES

1. Linda Gordon, quoted in Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright, *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism* (Boston: Allison Publications, 1979), 192.
2. Luxemburg is quoted in the introduction to Elzbieta Ettinger, ed., *Comrade and Lover, Rosa Luxemburg's Letters to Leo Jogiches* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1979), XV; see also Elzbieta Ettinger, *Rosa Luxemburg: A Life* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).
3. J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg,* abridged edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 41.
4. J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg,* 2 vols., London 1966, vol. 1, p. 14.
5. "Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle," anthologized in Dick Howard, ed., *Selected Political Writings: Rosa Luxemburg* (New York: Monthly Review Press), p. 222.
6. See the essays on feminism in Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and other Essays* (New York: Dover, 1969).
7. Karen Jaehne and Lenny Rubenstein, "A Great Woman Theory of History: An Interview with Margarethe von Trotta," *Cineaste,* Vol. XV, No. 4, 1987.
8. *Ibid.,* p. 26.

LOVE STREAMS

Directed by John Cassavetes. Screenplay by Cassavetes and Ted Allan. Based on the play by Allan. Photography: Al Ruban. Music: Bo Harwood. Editing: George Villasenor. Cannon.

Love Streams has the freewheeling emotional sprawl that is a hallmark of Cassavetes's films, and it has some familiar faces from his previous work (Gena Rowlands, Cassavetes himself, Seymour Cassel). But this remarkable study of sprung marriages and temporary couplings also has a richly precarious balance and a fullness of perspective that perhaps no other Cassavetes film has had. That combination, in turn, seems to come both from a quirky elegance of *mise en scène* that is relatively new in the director's movies and from a dark, knowing comic ease which is perhaps unprecedented in his film work and which seems to realign the gender conflicts that sometimes clogged the earlier films.

It begins with a dishevelled-looking fellow (Cassavetes) in a tuxedo entering a house which seems to be his, and calmly and repeatedly in-

troducing himself (''I'm Robert Harmon'') to its variously ensconced occupants—all of whom are young, glamorous, and female. Their matter-of-fact welcome implicitly extends beyond a single night to semi-permanent residency, though very early on we also see the man in the tux at an odd-looking night club where he is taking an unmistakable interest in a young singer (Diahnne Abbott). Almost as soon, we are observing the mildly disturbed Sarah (Rowlands) at legal proceedings for custody of her daughter by her ex-husband (Cassel). The casually disjointed narrative slides through another evening at the night club, followed by Harmon's drunken dallying with the singer, and a second custody hearing, after which Sarah attempts to follow her psychiatrist's advice and pursue a love affair in Europe (''They don't know you there'').

Harmon is a writer, though what his books are about is not entirely clear—women, night life, loneliness, and sex are all cited as his subject at various times. Much later, we'll learn that Sarah is his sister, but by then he's also running off, on impulse, to Las Vegas with his small son (the offspring of ''the second marriage'') whom he's just met for the first time. This welter of temporary relationships and troubled egos steadily gathers itself toward the characteristic rough-edged, loose-ended soul-searching of Cassavetes's psychodramas with their slightly heightened air of earnestly impassioned group-therapy sessions. But whereas the dogged mining of the emotions in earlier Cassavetes films can seem an end in itself and sometimes very nearly an aimless one, the calmly relentless exposure of emotion in *Love Streams* moves well beyond the massive, semi-encyclopedic, and very theatrical documentation of anguish and need in *Faces, Woman Under the Influence,* etc. The unavoidably overbearing photography and mise-en-scenery-chewing has been overtaken by a much more considered use of the camera and by the lucid perspective and poise that come of ruefully experienced humor.

The comedy of *Love Streams* is always linked to its characters' pathos—and that has much to do with its special richness. It is not a ''funny'' movie in the way that *Minnie and Moskowitz* is, but its darker, brooding humor is rooted in an array of emotions that few American film comedies of any era can match. Typical elements of the humor reside in Harmon's

LOVE STREAMS: *John Cassavetes, Diahnne Abbott*

drunken, disarmingly suave hilarity during his nocturnal escapades, in his deadpan hospitality to practically everybody, and in his relaxed deflection of a homosexual pass. Some reside also in Sarah's near-slapstick scenes with her mountains of luggage and with the small menagerie of animals she sets loose in Harmon's suburban backyard. But this film's comedy is also in the drama of compulsive talk and soul-bearing, the euphemisms for mismatched or unwieldy emotions (''I'm almost not crazy, now''), and the fencing between couples who frequently have a bond but little harmony (''I love the way you move.'' ''Yeah.'' ''I *really* love the way you move.'' ''Thanks.'') The verbal play with shades of meaning and degrees of feeling is frequently a matter of timing and tone, and quotations alone cannot do it justice. That is to say, it's not only a matter of *performed* comedy, but also of emotional events and situations which the film articulates in wordless ways even as its characters go their wordy ways.

These ''contextual'' dimensions emerge via the interplay of the spoken and the unspoken, and through the inflections and positioning that complicate and reframe the characters' pronouncements about life and love. Cassavetes's indulgence of his actors' emotionalized spilling of ''secrets'' is a factor here as always, but in *Love Streams* some of the richer moments derive from a sharp sense of what is *not* said. When Harmon and his recently arrived son are alone in the house for the first time, Harmon suddenly tells him, ''Go to your right and go right again.'' Harmon is giving directions to the bathroom, and we see that he has understood without being told that his son

needs to relieve himself and is afraid to ask. It is a moment of attentiveness which also evokes the distance between father and son, and it is a mildly jarring bit of communication (one of many such in the film) in that it seems at first to lack any context, any relevance to what has been going on. Similarly, when Sarah first arrives at Robert's house in one of two taxis she's crammed with luggage, we see Harmon opening the cab door and we see Sarah looking sheepishly back at him from behind a pile of cartons and bags. She says only, "Paris," with a hint of a shrug, and he dives over the bags to embrace her. In a film which has several dream and fantasy sequences, such happenings pointedly resemble dreams in their apparent illogic, but their primary significance has to do with the film's touching, perceptive sense of the intricate, shifting relationship between what is said and what needn't be said, between incompletely shared emotions and silent understandings.

These uncommonly attentive perspectives gather effectiveness from the collisions of dream-like "realities" with the sequences of fantasy (Sarah's extravagant, darkly comic assault on her husband—with an automobile) and dream (Robert's brief hallucinatory impression that a rather mythic-looking visitor has arrived; Sarah attempting to heal her marriage with joke-shop gadgets). But camera finesse also makes a surprising contribution. His actor-centered pronouncements to the contrary, Cassavetes's films have taken on a newly graceful and articulate *mise en scène* (beginning, I think, with *Opening Night* in 1978). The overbearing close-ups are gone; the camera usually maintains a certain distance from the actors and, with occasional help from lateral tracking shots that are very striking, establishes a fluid, spur-of-the-moment sense of the characters' physical space and social context. Thus, speeches that might have enhanced the emotional claustrophobia (however deliberate) of earlier Cassavetes films (e.g., Harmon's "Yeah, well, life is a series of suicides, divorces, promises broken, children smashed, whatever") can now be more readily grasped from a variety of incisive angles. The example here is at once all too true and almost completely beside the point—it has obvious application, which the characters resist without really being able to avoid, and insofar as it's really only a cover remark for another abrupt departure by Harmon, it looks like transparent (and almost weightless) cynicism. The subsequent delay of this departure, through at least two more stages of revised explanation and reassurance between Robert and Sarah, is characteristic of the film's patience with emotions which run hot and cold and relationships which are variously compelling and unsettled.

Instability of emotion is pervasive in the film and serves as its imponderable motive force. Relationships which are at once intimate and distant proliferate throughout. Sarah and Robert in particular are constantly reaching out to other people and, almost simultaneously, putting them off. When Harmon takes his son to Las Vegas and then leaves him alone in a hotel room overnight, he is both offering a father-son adventure and taking too little account of the boy's age. He is also fleeing the newly arrived Sarah, and the boy has been temporarily "dumped" by his mother. And when Harmon returns the boy to his mother and stepfather, he gets punched for his trouble (and theirs), and his humiliation elicits genuine-sounding expressions of love from his son even as the latter flees into the arms of his mother, who in turn begins to reveal troubled (and hitherto withheld) affection for Harmon.

Sarah, who wants to believe "that love is a continuous stream" is the character who comments most explicitly on issues of emotional uncertainty and her paradoxically phrased quest for emotional balance and continuity ("I'm going to get *balance* . . . then I can go back to being obsessive about my family") speaks for the film's implicit gravitation toward a non-hysterical approach to the perpetual crises that mark these characters' lives. The "temporary insanity" which is the subject of considerable half-veiled humor at the child-custody hearings seems a near-permanent state here, and yet also becomes a model of *in situ* sanity that has been at least half-freed from a priori standards of intimate behavior and emotional adjustment. It's a cluttered species of balance that comes of an ability to play with obsession, rather than subduing or submitting, and which can understand unspoken continuities in definitively erratic motions of emotion.

Neither Robert nor Sarah can be said to have fully achieved this balance by the end of the film—and it seems part of the point that neither should. They may have traded roles—it is now Sarah who makes departures and Robert

who longs to nurture—but the closing scenes of the film continue the patterns of separation and need while also confirming and maintaining the cumulative perspective of sanity which is "almost not crazy now." For the film has confirmed that, contrary to Sarah's wishes, "Love can stop," but the prevailing calm perspective on ceaselessly evolving relationships and ebb and flow emotions represents a "continuous stream" that is more difficult and less permanent than that which Sarah and, to some extent, Robert long for. That prevailing calmness emerges from the film's half-comic deflections of its multitude of melodramatic possibilities and, more particularly, from late scenes of crisis transformed by muted comic resourcefulness and brusque dismantling of melodramatic mind sets.

In a sequence in the second half of the film, for example, Robert responds instantly to a telephone invitation from Susan's mother and soon arrives at Susan's place with a six-pack of Coke and what looks like a carton of liquor. After a shift to Sarah's visit ("for the sex") to a bowling alley, we see Harmon dancing and laughing with "Mom," who's got herself up in an impromptu costume that is part geisha and part flower maiden. Susan walks in on this, with a male friend in tow, says nothing, continues on through to her child's room for a few words, and returns to find her mother whiningly trying to explain her appearance. Harmon exits as gracefully as possible (Susan's date remaining an impassive onlooker throughout), and makes a parting plea to Susan on behalf of her mother's need for "fun." This is yet another fractured-couples scene, and in more conventional hands it would be an occasion for confrontations and humiliation. The impassive date and the apologetic matron insure that the potential for melodrama remains, but the scene is predominantly comic in the low-key way that it juggles and reroutes audience expectations and reveals in its characters an earthy adaptability that is at once funny and admirable.

Similarly, after Robert and Sarah have returned home from their respective spur-of-the-moment romantic digressions, she receives a phone call from her daughter, who plainly needs to talk with her mother but finds herself mouthing accusations about the suffering the divorce has caused for her father. After the ex-husband has taken the phone and quarrelled with Sarah over her characteristic questions ("Do you believe that love is a continuous stream?"), Sarah hangs up on him. But Harmon, who is now seen listening on another line, defends his sister to Jack and tells the latter to lay off. That done, he turns to Sarah and, like Jack, raises the question of her child's needs, and soon finds himself mouthing a half-defense of Jack's needs. Obviously enough, there is a near-farcical pattern in these shifting emotional alliances, but somber dramatic force as well. Both sequences have to do with the aching need for that "continuous stream" and a painful sense of its absence, and both have the distancing and resiliency of comic intelligence as a crucial balancing force.

The transitory, multi-valenced dynamics among emotionally volatile characters has always been an integral part of Cassavetes's filmmaking. But the unstable mixtures of pathos and exuberance that often resulted are given much more artful treatment here. *Love Streams* plainly has two central characters, but it has no emotionally privileged ones, and its extraordinary balance in the midst of so much emotional disarray depends crucially on that. We can see, for example, the respective parental passions and failings of Robert and Sarah without ever feeling forced toward condemnation or defense. Robert Harmon's limitations as companion, father, brother, lover are made evident and yet we see him and the others from an attentive, dispassionate vantage point that keeps alive the possibility of responsibility and responsiveness in him, and in us.

This open, flexible embrace is evident from very early on in the film. At the night club, Harmon is approached by a drag queen who asks, "Are you gay?" "No," says Harmon, adding after a pause, "Sorry." "It's okay," comes the reply, "you're safe here." Cassavetes gives Harmon's being "sorry" a stoical directness that has neither regret nor condescension in it. The exchange is filmed with Cassavetes facing the camera and his questioner (whose face is never fully seen), and the "drag queen" identification is left to what we can conclude from the attire, tone of voice, and the nature of the conversation. The assurance of "safety" has a kind of reverse irony, in that Harmon does not seem to feel threatened. Later, we'll hear another gay character praise Harmon for the way he writes about loneliness, and Harmon's visits to the night club/bar have a literary mo-

tive which may or may not antedate his interest in Susan. In any event, these brief encounters with parts of the gay world are among the striking moments in which the film establishes its idiom of complex intimacy.

"You're safe here" also has something to do with the film's elusively continuous stream and with the "safe place" that American melodrama and romance have always sought. Cassavetes, like Henry Jaglom (whose brilliant first film was titled *A Safe Place*), has always worked with the assumption that emotional "safety" can be found only via emotional risk, and both have given their actors, scripts, and shooting methods considerable latitude with just that in mind. The primacy Cassavetes has given to his actors has always had some version of this mystique as a motive force, sometimes with results that seemed to do more for the performers than for the audience. Consequently, his earlier films may work best as half-fictional documentaries on the actor as "improviser" (*Faces* is perhaps especially successful in that respect), and their best dramatic moments are matters of barely contained theatrical fury and the exhilaration of uninhibited conversation. *Love Streams* is of exceptional interest in part because it conveys that uninhibitedness without ever leaving the audience on the outside. Its consistently wayward form draws us into its characters' multifaceted balancing acts.

The suave, calmly unpredictable *mise en scène* of *Love Streams* does not represent a repudiation of Cassavetes's actor-oriented aims so much as a revelatory extension of them. Robert and Sarah are preoccupied by answers to "big" questions—all of which may be difficult to formulate or not forthcoming at all. In a windy bit of near-sophistry, Robert expounds on the risky conditions of a *saving* wisdom: "We can't tell *them* the answer unless they ask *us* the question, right?" That this assertion lapses into the form of a question is, of course, characteristic of *Love Streams.* And a similar pattern of complication develops, in reverse, in Sarah's attempt to reassure herself with what "Daddy" used to say: "For every problem, there is an answer."[1] The vagaries of emotion and event in the film suggest we might accept the wisdom of "Daddy" only if we agree to add that "For every answer, there is another problem." The film's success in giving form and comic-dramatic perspective to such vital variables might be seen as "the answer" in *Love Streams.* And the film itself provides the "continuous stream" for the disparity and disarray in the characters' lives. That the "continuous stream" may be found in this neglected, perspicacious movie is "the answer," and that it may not exist outside or beyond this movie is the answer's problem. And ours.

The gay-bar sequence also helps the film reconsider the gender conflicts that mark earlier Cassavetes films. Male rage and female suffering are recurring focal points with Cassavetes, and many of his films seem to alternate indulgence and overcompensation along those lines. In *Love Streams,* a father-son exchange about "how to be a man" seems both a summation and a dispersal of the conflicted sexuality and gender perspectives in earlier Cassavetes. Harmon urges the boy, when he will have reached his teens, to hitch-hike across the country and visit truckstops to "find out what men are really like." But just before this bit of open-road romanticism, Harmon is saying, "I don't like men a lot. I'm a writer—I don't make money on men. Nobody's interested—I think they're boring." And a little later he will also say, "I don't like women anyway, y'know. I like kids, and I like older people. Because—they have this secret—they don't need anything—they're innocent." The film makes the compounded self-deception in this quite evident—via Harmon's erratic attention to his son's needs, the middle-aged panic of the main characters, and the patterns of evasiveness, abandonment, and emotional disproportion.

But Harmon's words to his small son also become another kind of moment of recognition: the cult of spontaneity and liberated emotional secrets in Cassavetes now shows itself as yet another "male" fantasy, yet another American dream of self-sufficiency and innocence to be found somewhere away from the places where people live in groups. A special accomplishment of *Love Streams* resides in its skill in revealing the deceits in the male and female versions of the "continuous stream" and in its doing so from a basically sympathetic vantage point. A film-making sensibility more inclined to clutch at absolutes would have to make tragedy or travesty of this deceit, but the compassion and honesty of Cassavetes and company give it life as the sort of tough comedy which knows that presumed freedom from deceit may be a great

deception of its own.

I cannot say just how much the achievement of this film has to do with the Ted Allan play (*My Sister's Keeper*) from which it springs—though the involvement of Cassavetes and Rowlands in the stage production and Allan's collaboration on the screenplay seem likely signs of significant carry-over here.[2] A more urgent matter for now, however, is that this Berlin Film Festival prizewinner has had rather limited theatrical distribution in the US. Indeed, the general neglect of Cassavetes's recent films is a scandalous reflection on the general state of the US movie industry. Perhaps Raymond Carney's wildly uneven but extraordinarily interesting book on Cassavetes will attract renewed attention to the director's work. But were it not for videotape (the only medium in which I've been able to see this film), *Love Streams* would be even more deserving than it already is for status as an overlooked masterpiece. In this light, the film's use of Billie Holliday's "Where Are You?"—which has obvious relevance to the movie's characters—is also a question addressed by the film-maker to "the world of film" and to the audience that should be within reach.

—PETER HOGUE

1. In an article for the New York *Times* (reprinted in the San Francisco *Chronicle Datebook*, Sept. 23, 1984), Cassavetes cited these words as those of his own father.
2. Cassavetes's role in the film was played by Jon Voigt on stage. In the *Times* article cited above, Cassavetes notes that the flm adds an offbeat comic dimension to the play's darkness.

THE LAST EMPEROR

Director: Bernardo Bertolucci. Script: Marc Peploe, with Bertolucci and Enzo Ungari. Producer: Jeremy Thomas. Photography: Vittorio Storaro. Music: Ryuichi Sakamoto, David Byrne, Cong Su. Columbia.

There seem to be two responses to Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor*. One is typified by a remark I overheard as I left the theater: "I loved it! And I learned so much about history too." The other is characterized by a *New York Times* article which, in its obsession with verisimilitude, set out to prove the historical *in*accuracy of the film.[1] Perhaps these concerns with the film's true-to-lifeness should not be surprising. With its extravagantly ornamental sets and multicolored costumed "cast of thousands," *The Last Emperor* harkens back to Hollywood epics à la Cecil B. De Mille. Unlike De Mille, however, Bertolucci has openly rejected the ideal of historical accuracy. As Bertolucci remarked concerning the film's pre-production research: "We had to know the entire truth before we could *choose* to be unfaithful to it."[2]

To focus only on *The Last Emperor*'s verisimilitude is therefore misguided at best: a more interesting approach to the historical film is to examine its faculty of engaging the viewer in a game of *belief and disbelief*. As Jean-Louis Comolli has written, the historical film is a *game,* one which stretches the audience's belief in cinema's fictional apparatus to its utmost. Comolli writes, "The simulacrum does not fool a 'passive' spectator (there are no 'passive spectators'): the spectator has to participate in his own fooling; the simulacrum is the *means* whereby he is helped to fool himself."[3] It is the foregrounding of this game of belief and disbelief within *The Last Emperor* which I would like to explore in this review—a game which, no matter how self-reflexive, ultimately does not liberate the viewer from the "shackles" of spectatorship nor move the film beyond the confines of a certain dangerous tradition of film history and orientalist historiography.

Past films by Bertolucci have shown an awareness of ideology as not only a set of political beliefs imposed from above, but as a way in which one experiences the world and perceives reality. *The Conformist* (1970) and *The Spider's Stratagem* (1970) implicitly critique the "naturalness" of film, showing it to be a cultural apparatus which constructs individuals as ideological subjects, fabricating a reality that appears unified and ahistorical.[4] Like the protagonists Marcello Clerici (Jean-Louis Trintignant) in *The Conformist* and Athos Magnani (Giulio Brogi) in *The Spider's Stratagem* who are entrapped in the ideological screens of fascist history, the emperor Pu Yi is both subject of and subject to history. Although the narrative of Pu Yi's life is presented in a coherent, chronological form—beginning with his arrest in 1950, and then proceeding in flashbacks through his entire life—Pu Yi (John Lone) is also presented as an allegorical figure for the ideal film spectator, produced as a subject-effect, seduced by the fetishism of film.

Like another story about an emperor, Hans

deception of its own.

I cannot say just how much the achievement of this film has to do with the Ted Allan play (*My Sister's Keeper*) from which it springs—though the involvement of Cassavetes and Rowlands in the stage production and Allan's collaboration on the screenplay seem likely signs of significant carry-over here.[2] A more urgent matter for now, however, is that this Berlin Film Festival prizewinner has had rather limited theatrical distribution in the US. Indeed, the general neglect of Cassavetes's recent films is a scandalous reflection on the general state of the US movie industry. Perhaps Raymond Carney's wildly uneven but extraordinarily interesting book on Cassavetes will attract renewed attention to the director's work. But were it not for videotape (the only medium in which I've been able to see this film), *Love Streams* would be even more deserving than it already is for status as an overlooked masterpiece. In this light, the film's use of Billie Holliday's "Where Are You?"—which has obvious relevance to the movie's characters—is also a question addressed by the film-maker to "the world of film" and to the audience that should be within reach.

—PETER HOGUE

1. In an article for the New York *Times* (reprinted in the San Francisco *Chronicle Datebook*, Sept. 23, 1984), Cassavetes cited these words as those of his own father.
2. Cassavetes's role in the film was played by Jon Voigt on stage. In the *Times* article cited above, Cassavetes notes that the flm adds an offbeat comic dimension to the play's darkness.

THE LAST EMPEROR

Director: Bernardo Bertolucci. Script: Marc Peploe, with Bertolucci and Enzo Ungari. Producer: Jeremy Thomas. Photography: Vittorio Storaro. Music: Ryuichi Sakamoto, David Byrne, Cong Su. Columbia.

There seem to be two responses to Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor*. One is typified by a remark I overheard as I left the theater: "I loved it! And I learned so much about history too." The other is characterized by a *New York Times* article which, in its obsession with verisimilitude, set out to prove the historical *in*accuracy of the film.[1] Perhaps these concerns with the film's true-to-lifeness should not be surprising. With its extravagantly ornamental sets and multicolored costumed "cast of thousands," *The Last Emperor* harkens back to Hollywood epics à la Cecil B. De Mille. Unlike De Mille, however, Bertolucci has openly rejected the ideal of historical accuracy. As Bertolucci remarked concerning the film's pre-production research: "We had to know the entire truth before we could *choose* to be unfaithful to it."[2]

To focus only on *The Last Emperor*'s verisimilitude is therefore misguided at best: a more interesting approach to the historical film is to examine its faculty of engaging the viewer in a game of *belief and disbelief*. As Jean-Louis Comolli has written, the historical film is a *game,* one which stretches the audience's belief in cinema's fictional apparatus to its utmost. Comolli writes, "The simulacrum does not fool a 'passive' spectator (there are no 'passive spectators'): the spectator has to participate in his own fooling; the simulacrum is the *means* whereby he is helped to fool himself."[3] It is the foregrounding of this game of belief and disbelief within *The Last Emperor* which I would like to explore in this review—a game which, no matter how self-reflexive, ultimately does not liberate the viewer from the "shackles" of spectatorship nor move the film beyond the confines of a certain dangerous tradition of film history and orientalist historiography.

Past films by Bertolucci have shown an awareness of ideology as not only a set of political beliefs imposed from above, but as a way in which one experiences the world and perceives reality. *The Conformist* (1970) and *The Spider's Stratagem* (1970) implicitly critique the "naturalness" of film, showing it to be a cultural apparatus which constructs individuals as ideological subjects, fabricating a reality that appears unified and ahistorical.[4] Like the protagonists Marcello Clerici (Jean-Louis Trintignant) in *The Conformist* and Athos Magnani (Giulio Brogi) in *The Spider's Stratagem* who are entrapped in the ideological screens of fascist history, the emperor Pu Yi is both subject of and subject to history. Although the narrative of Pu Yi's life is presented in a coherent, chronological form—beginning with his arrest in 1950, and then proceeding in flashbacks through his entire life—Pu Yi (John Lone) is also presented as an allegorical figure for the ideal film spectator, produced as a subject-effect, seduced by the fetishism of film.

Like another story about an emperor, Hans

Christian Andersen's "The Emperor's New Clothes,"[5] *The Last Emperor* is a story about surface and the act of looking. In Andersen's fairy tale, the magical cloth does not exist. Instead the weaving is the *story* that the two swindlers tell the emperor, a story which becomes a veil: the emperor and his subjects see that they do not see but are afraid to admit their own "stupidity" or "incompetence." Believing in the clothes covers the fear shared by both the emperor and his subjects of being caught "naked," the fear that they cannot trust their own eyes. Like the film viewer who fetishizes the cinematic apparatus, the emperor and his subjects fetishize the "magical" cloth. The new clothes are both a sign of fullness and coherence, and a lie hiding a fear of inadequacy or nakedness.

Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor* is also a weaving, a story which embroiders upon theories of film spectatorship and fetishism. As a fabric, it too consists of a telling. Bertolucci's film *exposes* the fetishism of ideology and film spectatorship, constructed as the film is out of screens superimposed on screens, veils covering veils in rich brocaded clothes. The veils or screens exist not only in the court of the Forbidden City, but also later in the screens of ideology of Manchukuo, and of the Maoist re-education camp; they also parallel the screen onto which a film is projected. Like the ideal film spectator who both sees the fabricated nature of cinema and yet denies it at the same time in order to enjoy watching the film, Pu Yi deludes himself into thinking that he is master of his own domain, when in fact he is merely a symbol and puppet manipulated for the benefit of various political regimes.

The visual style and narrative of the film is composed of screens of ideologies, mirroring the way in which the relations of subjectivity, lack, and spectatorship are conceptualized by Bertolucci. The first screen is the billowing yellow canopy that fascinates the three-year-old Pu Yi, who runs out of the Hall of Supreme Harmony into the bright sunlight on the first day of his reign, and is suddenly greeted by thousands of kowtowing courtiers. A second screen is the long white sheet that prevents the eunuchs from touching the adolescent Pu Yi as they play together. These playmates appear only as shadows from the point of view of Pu Yi; the white sheet brings to mind both the movie screen and the wall in Plato's cave. A third screen is part of yet another game: Pu Yi and his two wives play hide and seek under a silk sheet—as we viewers only see their shapes while simultaneously an unseen fire, like the fire in Plato's cave, blazes in the Forbidden City's storerooms, set by the eunuchs who are afraid that Pu Yi will discover their thefts. The final screen is the crisp, red flag of Mao's Red Guard, waved by the zealous marching youth of the Cultural Revolution.

Pu Yi's imprisonment is a necessary component of his desire, since only *within* the prison can he be emperor. Like the fetishism of the ideal film spectator described by Metz, his desire is sustained by a game in which he oscillates between belief (Yes, I am emperor) and disbelief (No, I am not emperor). The psychoanalytic underpinnings of his desire are revealed in his fixation on returning to the mother and his search for origins, a return perhaps to the Imaginary: Pu Yi is seen repeatedly running after a fleeing mother figure, first his wet nurse, then upon his mother's death, and finally when his wife is forced to an asylum. Always held back by lackeys, his return to the mother is never successful, as indeed it cannot be: his overriding desire is to remain emperor.

Pu Yi's desire to be emperor, even a puppet emperor, is molded by the needs of the particular regime in power. Because Pu Yi is an emperor, he must abide by certain rules, akin to those of the model film viewer. His is a royal body that Pu Yi himself learns to objectify: he is rigid and impassive; he never uses the pronoun "I," referring to himself in the third person or as the royal "we"; and as emperor he is supposed to see all, but no one may look at him. Like the film viewer who, identifying with the camera, comes to believe that s/he is in the position of the "transcendental eye," Pu Yi thinks he is all-perceiving when in fact he is only allowed to see what his captors want him to see. Since no one may look at him, since no one else may wear the royal yellow, and since no other men are allowed to live in the palace of the Forbidden City, Pu Yi cannot see any representation of himself. He never sees himself in the clothes of another, or in the gaze of another, flattened as a representation within that gaze, just as the film viewer does not find his or her body reflected in the mirror that is the movie screen.

THE LAST EMPEROR: *At three, Pu Yi becomes heir to the dragon throne*

As the Lord Chamberlain tells the tutor Mr. Johnston (Peter O'Toole), Pu Yi is a symbol of great importance. As symbol, therefore, he not only figures for the textually produced viewer, but for the object of spectatorship itself. In every regime, Pu Yi is under a surveillance by a power that monitors and contains him. His first overseer is of course the Lord Chamberlain, with the eunuchs. The architecture of the Forbidden City moreover is conducive to voyeurism: doorways are framed by doorways, rooms lie within rooms, and the palace is its own *mise-en-abyme.*

Pu Yi's next important overseer is Johnston. He is also a voyeur: it is Johnston who watches Pu Yi play the screen game with the eunuchs and Johnston who photographs him before he leaves the Forbidden City, a neat trope for his particular objectification of the emperor. Johnston introduced Pu Yi to western education and western ideas of reform, and yet he keeps Pu Yi ignorant of the political realities of revolution. Instead Johnston encourages his passion for superficial reform like western fads, clothes, tennis, etc.

After his years of tutoring under Johnston, Pu Yi is forced to leave the Forbidden City by Jiang Jie-Shi's (Chiang Kai-Shek's) troops, but his blindness to the imperatives of political reform and to the fact that his monarchy is indeed obsolete is symbolized by his wearing of dark glasses, and his stumbling walk as he goes outside the palace gate for the first time. He thus leaves the first prison only to enter another one. The Japanese become Pu Yi's third overseers by convincing him that they will help him become emperor again. The sequences with the Japanese, reminiscent of the *mise-en-scène* of *The Conformist,* are replete with the signifiers of "fascinating fascism," to use Susan Sontag's term, from the grey and black interior architecture of his new palace, combining sterile modernity and kitsch, to the playboy Pu Yi's smooth rendition of "Am I Blue?", like a crooner in an Italian white-telephone film.

The new palace is another theater of shadows, a fascist prison for the deluded Pu Yi who refuses to perceive the imperialist motives of his puppet masters. The coronation ball is a dramatic metaphor for this new prison/cave: we see Amikasu (Ryuichi Sakamoto) directing cameramen as the harsh lighting used for filming creates a chiaroscuro world where the dancers cast large shadows. Only Pu Yi's wife, Wan Jung (Joan Chen) protests their imprisonment. Her self-destructive resistance is characterized by the sequence in which she eats lotus blossoms petal by petal as her husband greets the

Japanese dignitaries, thereby calling attention to her and Pu Yi's role in Manchukuo as mere "lotus eaters."

Just as Pu Yi came to know that he was not really Emperor of China in the Forbidden City, he becomes increasingly aware of his manipulation by the Japanese, but in both cases he is immobilized by his own desire to be emperor. Although the monochromatic khaki world of the Fushun prison, a re-education camp for Mao's new order, is a starkly different environment, it does parallel his earlier prisons. Once again we have a place of surveillance, this time tied to our own viewing of the film. Our voyeurism is pointed out by our identification with the point-of-view peephole shot of the governor watching Pu Yi having his shoes tied by his former valet. Like the governor, we too desire to learn the truth about Pu Yi.

In many ways, the governor seems to be the best of Pu Yi's overseers. As the governor tells the prisoners in his orientation speech: "We believe that men are good. We believe that the only way to change is to stare at the truth." Yet Bertolucci subverts any idealist notions that man has the ability to see the truth. In one crucial scene Pu Yi is made explicitly into a cinematic spectator, viewing a film composed of newsreel footage of Japanese atrocities in China and Manchukuo. But it is only when Pu Yi sees an image of *himself* that he stands, entranced, staring straight at his own mass-produced portrait. This "moment of truth" is immediately undermined, since the next shot is of the hailing hands of a rally, as if to highlight the notion that ideology hails the subject, fabricates a unified reality, reminding one of Louis Althusser's statement: "All ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects."[6] There is no child to cry out that the emperor hasn't got anything on, because ultimately there is no royal body, no referent of truth but only clothes, its signs.[7]

The final screen is that of China during the Cultural Revolution. Instead of the chanting golden-robed monks of the Forbidden City, there are Mao Zedong's marching, bullying children. The aging Pu Yi protests to these children that the governor "is a teacher, a good teacher," only to be ignored. The red flag waves, symbol of another blinding ideology; a group of uniformed girls in red arm bands march in a circle, to the accompaniment of accordionists lined up under a mural depicting the beaming face of Chairman Mao in the sun. In Plato's allegory the sun represented the light of truth, the Good; here the sun is just another propagandistic symbol of power. The movement of the girls in a circle with the red-flag-waving youth in the middle repeats the circular chase of the young Pu Yi and his brother Pu Chieh, and this choreographed use of screens is important because it represents the ultimate inescapability of ideology. Just as Marcello was caught in a swirling circle of dancers in *The Conformist,* Pu Yi never comes to any ultimate truth, but is always trapped within a circle.

So far in this review, I too may appear to be seduced by the visual splendor and conceptual sophistication of Bertolucci's latest work. I would like to argue now that although Bertolucci has created a film that exposes the woven screens of shadows and nesting boxes which constitutes both history and film spectatorship, at the center of the film is also a *lack,* an emptiness of a particular ideological nature.

To begin, the last screen of ideology which I discussed, that of the cruelty and theater of Maoist China, seems a little too transparent to me. What it reveals is another screen of ideology: that of the current Chinese government's support of the film through its granting of unprecedented permission for on-site shooting. The governor of the prison is even played by the actor and director Ying Ruocheng, Deputy Minister of Culture. A critical pespective on the Cultural Revolution is welcome to the present government with its program of economic reforms, and it is only because of these reforms that a western film-maker like Bertolucci would be allowed to film in China at all. This unfavorable representation of Maoist China also reveals a shift in Bertolucci's stance as an Italian Marxist intellectual who at one point was sympathetic to Mao but seems now to have shifted allegiances.[8]

Secondly, *The Last Emperor,* which after all is a work financed by Western capital, must be posited within a tradition of Hollywood realism and the epic film, especially in the ways it reflects orientalist historiography. At the film's conclusion, the horde of western tourists who invade the Hall of Supreme Harmony reminds us that we too have been tourists in Pu Yi's life. The seamlessness of the film is ruptured here,

and we are abruptly brought back to our own time. Yet for all its implied critique of the filmic apparatus, Bertolucci's film, as a narratival, chronological story of the life of one man, still constructs a classical subject-effect through the strategies of mainstream realist Hollywood cinema—witness the many marks of "authenticity," whether it be the inserted titles of place and date, or the logic of the continuity editing. The self-reflexive foregrounding of the apparatus of film does not challenge the essential game of belief and disbelief: Bertolucci allows us to disbelieve, as if winking at us—yes, it is only a game—in order that we may believe just a little bit longer. *The Last Emperor* is an airtight box that only contains boxes within boxes (Pu Yi's life, after all, spans the history of cinema), and I find the ending to be an excuse for what is basically still a realist film.

Moreover, *The Last Emperor* simulates the Hollywood epic films—it is a simulation of a simulation—through its self-reflexive style of realism. The difference between Cecil B. De Mille and Bertolucci is that at some level De Mille invoked the rubric of historical accuracy as a marketing strategy for his films. But despite De Mille's efforts, the Hollywood looks and accents of his actors, of course, always gave the film away. Bertolucci, on the other hand, is aware of the impossibility of historical authenticity, and thus he highlights the surface of history. The problem is that in creating another film about surface spectacle and Orientalism, Bertolucci feeds into some dangerous myths about China. Perhaps the epic, the spectacular Hollywood historical film, may be characterized as a representation of a power struggle, usually an essentialist Manichean struggle for some kind of empire, some kind of hegemony—a battle of ideologies. In lavish Hollywood spectacles like those of De Mille, there are usually implicit or explicit struggles between East and West, the barbaric versus the civilized, with the civilized always winning at the end. Although *The Last Emperor* tries to subvert the De Mille style of representing history by containing within the film a self-reflexive critique of film, it does not escape from one major problem: colonialist attitudes. *The Last Emperor*'s opium-dream-like oneiricism, although self-conscious, descends into old stereotypes about China and Orientalism: that is, Oriental cruelty, sensuality, and lack of rationality. The West has traditionally thought of itself as the site of substance and the Orient as one of *surface;* the fetishism of the film for dazzling silks, brocades, and embroidery still promotes an attitude that after all underneath the Orient's silky sleeves there is nothing there.

THE LAST EMPEROR: *Pu Yi expelled from the Forbidden City by the troops of Jiang Jie-Shi*

While Pu Yi was in his box of shadows, tremendous changes transformed China from the Middle Kingdom into the People's Republic of China. As the production history of *The Last Emperor* shows, moreover, the transformation continues, this time with the bourgeoisification of China. John Powers relates an interesting anecdote: in between takes of one scene, Chinese soldiers, hired as extras for the scene involving rebelling students, listened to disco and took pictures of themselves with cameras hidden underneath their costumes.[13] May we then think of Bertolucci himself as a last emperor? The irony of the title *The Last Emperor* is that in trying to get away from looking for the referent, for truth, for the causes of effects—this is a film about the *last* emperor, the title has nothing to do with firsts, with originals—this film which tries to subvert the ideological apparatus of film ends up hiding behind an old ideological screen, and a pernicious one at that. If Pu Yi is a model for the ideal film

spectator, we do not become the last emperors, aware of our production as subject-effects. Instead, the old empire continues, albeit under a new surface. —FATIMAH TOBING RONY

1. Richard Bernstein, "Is 'The Last Emperor' Truth or Propaganda?", *New York Times* (May 8, 1988), C1, 33.
2. John Powers, "Last Tango in Beijing," *American Film,* November 1987, Vol. XIII, No. 2, 40.
3. Jean-Louis Comolli, "Historical Fiction: A Body Too Much," *Screen* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1978), 46.
4. Jodi Hauptmann has written an unpublished paper that explores the relation of the story of Plato's cave to *The Conformist,* entitled "Slaves to Shadows: The Allegory of Plato's Cave in *The Conformist.*"
5. Hans Christian Andersen, *Eighty Fairy Tales,* trans. R. P. Keigwin (New York: Pantheon, 1982), 64-68. For my interpretation of "The Emperor's New Clothes" I am indebted in part to Shoshana Felman's class lectures on the same fairy tale.
6. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation," trans. Ben Brewster, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 173.
7. Ettore Scola's *La Nuit de Varennes* (1982) is arguably more successful in foregrounding the game of the historical film because of its playfulness. Scola does not show the body of the king at all, but shows us only the king's red inauguration coat, dwelling instead on the *discourse* centered around the king, the conversations held within the coach.
8. See Robert Philip Kolker's chapter on Godard, and Bertolucci's early politics in his chapter, " 'Versus Godard,' " *Bernardo Bertolucci* (London: British Film Institute, 1985), 11-35.
9. Powers, 40.

Books

CONSTRUCTIVISM IN FILM
The Man with a Movie Camera: A Cinematic Analysis

By Vlada Petric. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988. $44.50.

A new and comprehensive study of Dziga Vertov's most influential film has recently appeared to supplement Seth Feldman's and Annette Michelson's work on the great early Soviet documentarist. This ambitious book is divided into a background section on the Soviet avant-garde, a thematic analysis of *The Man with a Movie Camera,* and a formal analysis of the film's structure. Several detailed appendices contain a complete bibliography of Vertov's writings, his filmography, and a substantial bibliography of references. The book provides us with the most intensive study of Vertov now available in English, but though the scale and research of the project are most impressive, this book's critical reach too frequently exceeds its grasp.

One problem begins with the title; the subtitle really seems the book's more accurate title. For although Petric reads the Vertov film against the background of both Futurism and Constructivism in the Russia of the twenties, he never traces the appearance of the stylistic features of a constructivist or futurist cinema in a body of other films. However, what he does do is perform the first shot-by-shot analysis of this remarkable film in English. Dividing the film into 55 segments, Petric proceeds to read the film relying principally on his expert connoisseurship of Soviet cinema and culture.

To be sure, there is an infectious enthusiasm that runs throughout this study of Vertov's *The Man with a Movie Camera.* For both good and ill, Petric is unwavering in his admiration of Dziga Vertov, the great Soviet documentarist and perhaps the first film-maker ever to succeed in using silent cinema not only as a documentary and representational medium, but also as a critical discourse. More about this in a moment.

At its best, the book is brimming with the kind of unusual expertise that only an "insider," himself trained at VGIK, the Soviet Film Institute, and fluent in Russian, could bring to such a project. When he completed his course in film criticism at VGIK, Petric returned home to Yugoslavia to become one of Belgrade's leading film scholars and critics, carrying with him no small measure of skepticism about the Soviet system but an apparent reverence for its classical period, the twenties. He presently teaches film at Harvard and has now completed what is arguably the most intensive research on this major Vertov film in English. There is much to recommend it.

spectator, we do not become the last emperors, aware of our production as subject-effects. Instead, the old empire continues, albeit under a new surface. —FATIMAH TOBING RONY

1. Richard Bernstein, "Is 'The Last Emperor' Truth or Propaganda?", *New York Times* (May 8, 1988), C1, 33.
2. John Powers, "Last Tango in Beijing," *American Film,* November 1987, Vol. XIII, No. 2, 40.
3. Jean-Louis Comolli, "Historical Fiction: A Body Too Much," *Screen* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1978), 46.
4. Jodi Hauptmann has written an unpublished paper that explores the relation of the story of Plato's cave to *The Conformist,* entitled "Slaves to Shadows: The Allegory of Plato's Cave in *The Conformist.*"
5. Hans Christian Andersen, *Eighty Fairy Tales,* trans. R. P. Keigwin (New York: Pantheon, 1982), 64-68. For my interpretation of "The Emperor's New Clothes" I am indebted in part to Shoshana Felman's class lectures on the same fairy tale.
6. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation," trans. Ben Brewster, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 173.
7. Ettore Scola's *La Nuit de Varennes* (1982) is arguably more successful in foregrounding the game of the historical film because of its playfulness. Scola does not show the body of the king at all, but shows us only the king's red inauguration coat, dwelling instead on the *discourse* centered around the king, the conversations held within the coach.
8. See Robert Philip Kolker's chapter on Godard, and Bertolucci's early politics in his chapter, " 'Versus Godard,' " *Bernardo Bertolucci* (London: British Film Institute, 1985), 11-35.
9. Powers, 40.

Books

CONSTRUCTIVISM IN FILM
The Man with a Movie Camera: A Cinematic Analysis

By Vlada Petric. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988. $44.50.

A new and comprehensive study of Dziga Vertov's most influential film has recently appeared to supplement Seth Feldman's and Annette Michelson's work on the great early Soviet documentarist. This ambitious book is divided into a background section on the Soviet avant-garde, a thematic analysis of *The Man with a Movie Camera,* and a formal analysis of the film's structure. Several detailed appendices contain a complete bibliography of Vertov's writings, his filmography, and a substantial bibliography of references. The book provides us with the most intensive study of Vertov now available in English, but though the scale and research of the project are most impressive, this book's critical reach too frequently exceeds its grasp.

One problem begins with the title; the subtitle really seems the book's more accurate title. For although Petric reads the Vertov film against the background of both Futurism and Constructivism in the Russia of the twenties, he never traces the appearance of the stylistic features of a constructivist or futurist cinema in a body of other films. However, what he does do is perform the first shot-by-shot analysis of this remarkable film in English. Dividing the film into 55 segments, Petric proceeds to read the film relying principally on his expert connoisseurship of Soviet cinema and culture.

To be sure, there is an infectious enthusiasm that runs throughout this study of Vertov's *The Man with a Movie Camera.* For both good and ill, Petric is unwavering in his admiration of Dziga Vertov, the great Soviet documentarist and perhaps the first film-maker ever to succeed in using silent cinema not only as a documentary and representational medium, but also as a critical discourse. More about this in a moment.

At its best, the book is brimming with the kind of unusual expertise that only an "insider," himself trained at VGIK, the Soviet Film Institute, and fluent in Russian, could bring to such a project. When he completed his course in film criticism at VGIK, Petric returned home to Yugoslavia to become one of Belgrade's leading film scholars and critics, carrying with him no small measure of skepticism about the Soviet system but an apparent reverence for its classical period, the twenties. He presently teaches film at Harvard and has now completed what is arguably the most intensive research on this major Vertov film in English. There is much to recommend it.

For example, it took a Vlada Petric finally to decipher the recurring but enigmatic insert of a poster showing a man with his raised index finger at his lips, apparently signalling "quiet." Next to the man's, there is a woman's face, and although for years I took the poster to be one of the many "loose lips sink ships" variety common in the USSR at the time, I could never reconcile such a reading with the shot's insertion in the sequence where it first appears—an otherwise intimate sequence that shows a young woman asleep in her bedroom in the early morning light—nor with three subsequent different sequences in which shots of this poster are inserted.

However, as Petric points out, the text of this poster advertises a German film, *The Awakening of a Woman* or *The Awakened Sex,* launched in 1927 "as an artistic drama of passionate love." This closer reading of the poster produces a new associative motif in the montage; and this understanding in turn permits Petric to propose a richer and far more revealing reading of this and other important sequences in which the poster reappears.

Petric traces four ways in which the poster is modified and in turn modifies the meaning of three different sequences. First, he concedes that it does resemble the design of postrevolutionary posters that warned Soviet citizens to be vigilant and tightlipped. Second, it suggests that one should keep quiet because a woman is sleeping. Third, it functions as a humorous double entendre for those spectators familiar with the German movie, who know what kind of "awakening" is implied. But among its possible connotations, Petric also reads the poster as a "direct allusion to the current entertainment repertory promulgated by the New Economic Policy and the 'Leninist proportion'." Showing how Vertov suffered from the NEP's return to conventional entertainment films by the faltering Soviet system, while he and his group fought to retain a viable "proportion" for "unstaged" films, Petric's "unpacking" of this one key shot and its functions enriches and significantly alters one's reading and understanding of the film.

As might be evident by now, this book demands a reader with a serious interest in Soviet cinema. For such a reader, Petric cites significant phrases, script passages, and poems by Vertov, Mayakovsky and other major Russian figures in both English and transliterated Russian. Though some may fault him for not using the original Cyrillic or the accepted system of transliteration endorsed by most Slavic scholars, Russian speakers (or anyone with an appreciation of language) will find useful and convincing the side-by-side layouts and analyses of Mayakovsky's and Vertov's experiments in word play, sound, and sense that then permit Petric to show the influence of Mayakovsky's poetry on Vertov's cinema.

In any case, these are not my criticisms of the book; my uneasiness lies with other problems in this study. The first of these is that in Petric's unbridled enthusiasm for Vertov, he often produces an analysis that seems uncritical. This is not to propose that Vertov is undeserving of the most devoted attention. It is to say that the impressive erudition and enormous labor Petric's project represents are vitiated by a "treasuring" of Vertov that privileges him and his work over every other major film-maker and figure in the Soviet avant-garde save Mayakovsky and Eisenstein. (Petric provides a full account of the feud between Vertov and Eisenstein.) What this tone does is to suppress sharper textual interrogation of the film in favor of its appreciation. As will be shown, it blunts questions of difference (between Vertov's and Eisenstein's montage, for example) and the deeper investigation of the discursive (reflexive/critical) possibilities of cinema that seem Vertov's most influential contributions

Indeed, Petric's critical voice in this work seems somehow "defensive" about Vertov's pre-eminence in Soviet cinema. It is as if Petric wants to restore the respect Vertov lost as his work became neglected and his scenarios were rejected under the dark regime of Zhdanov and the onset of socialist realism. The problem is that Petric sustains his argument from the position Fredric Jameson has termed "high-modernist" aesthetics. For instance, comparing Vertov to Walter Ruttman whose film *Berlin: Symphony of a City* was made two years before *The Man with a Movie Camera,* Petric (quoting Vertov) calls the comparison "absurd," but adds, tellingly, that "Ruttmann's film, conceived within a traditional documentary framework, lacks *genuine avant-garde characteristics* (my emphasis)."

What these "genuine characteristics" are and how the imprimatur of critical "genuineness"

can be applied to the anarchic rifts and ruptures basic to any avant-garde—without "museumizing" art in the retrospect—are unanswered questions that reveal Petric's high-modernist assumptions about the avant-garde. Concerned for its appreciation, Petric's study of Vertov's film also seems to seek its legitimation as the apotheosis of modernist cinema.

Vertov's most original contribution to film would seem what Petric terms his "disruptive-associative" montage, the insertion of shots such as the poster, " 'subversive' shots that function as thematic antitheses which prompt a (new) dialectical grasp of the sequence's message." These shots which "subvert" the diegesis of a film (its denoted narrative space and time: characters, landscapes, and events) produce the strategy I also take to be Vertov's most radical and important contribution to today's film-makers seeking to push cinema beyond the limits of narrative and dramatic representation and toward the more fluid and self-reflexive possibilities of a critical discourse.

But what Petric terms disruptive-associative montage I take to be connected with Vertov's "theory of intervals," a theory of film structure and editing at the heart of his project, and one that distinguishes it from all others. Often set against Eisenstein's "collision montage," Vertov proposes a theory of film structure not based on "oppositions" or "conflicts" between elements in film, but rather—as in music—based on the *degree* (now quoting Vertov) "of movement between the pieces (shots) and frames." One can perhaps see at once that such a strategy of editing invites a more fluid, more comparative and contrastive, but in any case less "shock"-based use of film editing. Yet, this strategy, as Vertov reminds us in the famous preface to his film, is not to be confused with narrative, dramatic film-making.

This style of film-making may be theorized in many ways. Because it relies on a *relation* between points in images (or images and sounds) not only of "contradiction" or "conflict," Vertov's intervalic approach could be described as less periodic, less digitalized, more analogical, more musical, and more discursive. Because it is unsubmissive to scenic, dramatic, or narrative imperatives, Vertov's intervalic approach can exist free of both the diegetic and mimetic traditions of narration and representation—classical or modernist. This is why I would argue Vertov is so influential on postmodern work.

Coming as he did from an interest and early training in music and in sound (he began his experiments with a "Laboratory of Hearing"), Vertov was not bound nor dominated by a scenic sensibility. It has always seemed to me most plausible, for this reason, that Vertov's radicalized approach to filmic space and time was, from its inception, based on a musical model, rather than a visual, dramatic or narrative one. So much is obvious—from Vertov's own admonitions, Petric's work, and the connotations of a "theory of *intervals,*" since the interval is after all a musical term.

But what I mean to say is that the "logic" underpinning the arrangement of sounds in a given auditory, space-time event can be theorized as fundamentally different from the arrangement of sights. Where sight produces moments of fixation in a space that is defined by its surface geography, its limits, boundaries, and object-based, material constraints, hearing relies on a different "logic." This "logic" is not, as is vision, ballistic, but is rather more ambient. Further, its points of relation are not based on space-time causality, so much as moments of intensity, harmonies, and dissonances. In short, it is a different register of signification. Apply these theoretical formulations to cinema, as Vertov did, and a different "logic" of continuity is produced, based on a different rationale. This is the analysis of Vertov's "theory of intervals" that I sought but could not find in Petric's otherwise interesting and ambitious study.

One last word. Though often gifted and nuanced in its insights and interpretations of the segmented sequences, and offering a first-class baseline study of Vertov's major work, Petric's fine contribution could have been more credible and valuable if it were more systematic in its analysis of connotation. Proposing major codes across which Vertov's film could be read (à la Barthes's *S/Z*) might have been one way to proceed. Another might have been to read the shots and sequences paradigmatically. A more systematic reading may not have produced interpretations any richer than Vlada Petric, as a knowledgeable critic, did; but it may have brought us closer to an analytic method capable of understanding how Vertov's kind of film-making produces meaning.

—RONALD LEVACO

AUSTRALIAN CINEMA

By Brian McFarlane. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

The measure of an Australian critic writing about the movies, which have returned more to taxpayers than any other state-subsidized industry, is his opinion of *The Man from Snowy River.* When critic and teacher Brian McFarlane calls it "a witless extravaganza" and mocks its clichéd dialogue, we know we are on critical *terra firma* and not reading ad copy. McFarlane's approach is simple, only sketchy in plot synopsis, and designed not for the sake of criticism but to compare the realities of Australian society and landscape to their depiction in the indigenous cinema.

He is generous about movies that attempt to put an authentic stamp of Australia in their stories and imagery and brings forth numerous examples of the failure of imported American stars to add box-office cachet to homegrown stories. Most of these films will be unknown to the average American viewer or scholar, but cable-viewers are aware of medium-sized stars in exotic Australian settings. One of the thorny problems of the Australian industry is whether blocking thespian imports actually helps build local Australian stars or simply makes the sale of Australian films more difficult abroad. McFarlane is right in his view that casting is a matter of passion not practicality and it has been controversial since the days of the healthy silent cinema there. There is nothing blameworthy about wanting to create an internationally recognized cinema, and this is not a matter of Australia's "cultural cringe," which McFarlane rejects in favor of the economic explanation. In fact, he shows that a star system is a good idea that has taken on within Australia to benefit its own thespians while stars are occasionally plucked out of other galaxies that are not as impressive as Mel Gibson, Bryan Brown, Jack Thompson and, had his book not gone to press too soon, "Crocodile Dundee" (Paul Hogan).

What is the significance of the males achieving more than the females? Built into McFarlane's analysis is a perception of the dominant machismo at work in these films, drawn honestly from life, although he would appear to be incorrect in a claim that the lack of women writers in the industry contributes to the male codes and stories. In fact, some of Australia's strongest producers and story editors are women, if one remembers the production histories that were so enlightening in David Stratton's decade-old book *The Last New Wave.*

McFarlane's major contribution is his investigation of "mateship and its contribution to the failure of most Australian films to take the emotional life seriously," by which the author means, "a reticence in expressing feeling . . . because you might feel a fool if you tried to be articulate." This incapacity with the spoken word is a two-edged sword, which McFarlane fails to notice: on the one hand, it drives good film-makers toward startling, effective visual imagery that lives without dialogue; or, in the case of the less talented film-makers, it drives them to clichés found in old American movies. But McFarlane is more concerned with Australian film-makers' motivations, both personal and socially determined, than in their results. The trends he discovers in his own cinema, however, can also be seen on further horizons, which he readily—too readily—concedes. After the challenging claim that the standoff between men and women at country dances in previous decades "reflects the high value placed on mateship in the national identity and its concomitant relegation of women to subordinate roles," he shrugs it off with the observation that the international industry is similarly disinterested in love between the sexes. McFarlane seems to want to demonstrate his own heightened awareness, wrought possibly by Australian feminism's concern for psychological balance between the sexes, but he gives no more than a passing nod to the concerns of Australian women film-makers.

McFarlane recommends the Australians not lapse into middle-brow mock-ups of American movies, but forge something new. "Perhaps its protected nature has been one reason for a certain inhibited decorousness," which he abhors, almost snarling at the gentility of *My Brilliant Career* or *Careful, He Might Hear You.* Whatever McFarlane's personal taste, he remains capable of seeing the social forces at work in the many stories that have indeed charted Australian differences and, just as often as any other national cinema, offered new ways of seeing them.

—KAREN JAEHNE

CONTRIBUTORS

R. G. DAVIS teaches creative writing at San Francisco State University. TOM DOHERTY teaches at Boston University. CHARLES EIDSVIK is an independent film-maker who teaches at the University of Georgia. DAVID JAMES teaches in LA; his book *Allegories of Cinema* will soon be published by Princeton. PETER HOGUE teaches at Chico State University. KAREN JAEHNE is an executive with Spectrafilm in NYC. BRUCE KAWIN, author of *How Films Work,* teaches at the Univ. of Colorado, Boulder. RONALD LEVACO is working on *Round Eyes in the Middle Kingdom,* a documentary about Americans in China; he teaches at San Francisco State University. PAT MCGILLIGAN edited *Backstory;* his biography of Robert Altman, titled *Jumping Off the Cliff,* is due out shortly. RICHARD PORTON is researching a book on the relationship between film and anarchism. FATIMAH TOBING RONY works on issues of exoticism and historiography at Yale.

PERIODICALS UPDATE UPDATED

We have just learned that two film publications, *Jump Cut* and USC's *Spectator,* are abandoning their tabloid-newsprint formats and adopting more convenient, durable, and thus library-favored book-size formats. *Spectator* has also begun to publish articles drawn from writers outside USC, and its more readable layouts and more numerous illustrations indicate an intention to broaden its appeal. Its address is USC School of Cinema-Television, Division of Critical Studies, University Park, Los Angeles, CA 90089-2211; subscriptions are $10 for individuals, $20 for institutions.

Brief Notices

The Generals. Directed by East Germans Walter Heynowski and Gerhard Scheumann, this meticulous document is unlikely to reach a wide American audience because of its objective/documentary presentation which throws the dialectic of the story off balance so that the strength of the material is largely lost. This is unfortunate because there is a fascinating story here, of eight European generals who oppose nuclear weapons even though they have occupied high positions in NATO. The film juxtaposes the earlier career of each man (conveyed through B&W shots) with his present position, expressed under rather sharp questioning in starkly lit interview shots in color. Since all eight have signed a petition opposing the placement of Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe, these contrasts are often very effective: a French general is seen in combat in Algeria, and a German general on the Russian front, but both now oppose nuclear arms, as does a Portuguese general who is first seen signing a peace treaty with the liberation forces in Mozambique (he was later president of Portugal—we are not dealing with minor players here). During World War II, the French, Dutch, English, Portuguese, Swedish, and Greek generals had all in their own ways engaged in anti-Nazi activity (the West German after the war admitted his mistake, and the Italian had waited until the British took him captive to reveal his views). After the war, most of them led their countries' fights against national liberation struggles—for France in Vietnam and Algeria, for Portugal in Guinea Bissau and Mozambique, for Britain in Aden and Cyprus, etc. Now they all want nuclear weapons out of Europe. The documentary creaks along with its three-hour examination of the events in each man's life leading to the signing of the petition, accompanied by heavily melodramatic music pounding away at key points. (The music is supposedly by a student of Hanns Eisler, though Eisler would hardly have heralded the signing of a petition with a cataclysmic crescendo.) But the real importance of these men lies in their thrice-changed position—from anti-fascist to colonial oppressor to anti-nuke activist. In the end, the link is loyal nationalism: they oppose American control of nuclear weapons and explain that NATO is a device for keeping nuclear war away from US soil. But the film-makers never question the generals about their military stance. Do they support conventional military defense, and the military-industrial complexes in their respective countries? Are the generals just anti-American or are they anti-war? This careful documentary could have become extraordinary if we had understood at the beginning how many times these imperialist generals have changed, and if they had been seriously questioned. Can such trained killers really change? Or do they just sign petitions? —R. G. DAVIS

Controversy and Correspondence

LATE SHOW ON THE TELESCREEN: FILM STUDIES AND THE BOTTOM LINE

At the 1988 joint meeting of the University Film and Video Association and the Society for Cinema Studies (whose official topic was "the relationship of theory to practice"), there were

CONTRIBUTORS

R. G. DAVIS teaches creative writing at San Francisco State University. TOM DOHERTY teaches at Boston University. CHARLES EIDSVIK is an independent film-maker who teaches at the University of Georgia. DAVID JAMES teaches in LA; his book *Allegories of Cinema* will soon be published by Princeton. PETER HOGUE teaches at Chico State University. KAREN JAEHNE is an executive with Spectrafilm in NYC. BRUCE KAWIN, author of *How Films Work,* teaches at the Univ. of Colorado, Boulder. RONALD LEVACO is working on *Round Eyes in the Middle Kingdom,* a documentary about Americans in China; he teaches at San Francisco State University. PAT MCGILLIGAN edited *Backstory;* his biography of Robert Altman, titled *Jumping Off the Cliff,* is due out shortly. RICHARD PORTON is researching a book on the relationship between film and anarchism. FATIMAH TOBING RONY works on issues of exoticism and historiography at Yale.

PERIODICALS UPDATE UPDATED

We have just learned that two film publications, *Jump Cut* and USC's *Spectator,* are abandoning their tabloid-newsprint formats and adopting more convenient, durable, and thus library-favored book-size formats. *Spectator* has also begun to publish articles drawn from writers outside USC, and its more readable layouts and more numerous illustrations indicate an intention to broaden its appeal. Its address is USC School of Cinema-Television, Division of Critical Studies, University Park, Los Angeles, CA 90089-2211; subscriptions are $10 for individuals, $20 for institutions.

Brief Notices

The Generals. Directed by East Germans Walter Heynowski and Gerhard Scheumann, this meticulous document is unlikely to reach a wide American audience because of its objective/documentary presentation which throws the dialectic of the story off balance so that the strength of the material is largely lost. This is unfortunate because there is a fascinating story here, of eight European generals who oppose nuclear weapons even though they have occupied high positions in NATO. The film juxtaposes the earlier career of each man (conveyed through B&W shots) with his present position, expressed under rather sharp questioning in starkly lit interview shots in color. Since all eight have signed a petition opposing the placement of Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe, these contrasts are often very effective: a French general is seen in combat in Algeria, and a German general on the Russian front, but both now oppose nuclear arms, as does a Portuguese general who is first seen signing a peace treaty with the liberation forces in Mozambique (he was later president of Portugal—we are not dealing with minor players here). During World War II, the French, Dutch, English, Portuguese, Swedish, and Greek generals had all in their own ways engaged in anti-Nazi activity (the West German after the war admitted his mistake, and the Italian had waited until the British took him captive to reveal his views). After the war, most of them led their countries' fights against national liberation struggles—for France in Vietnam and Algeria, for Portugal in Guinea Bissau and Mozambique, for Britain in Aden and Cyprus, etc. Now they all want nuclear weapons out of Europe. The documentary creaks along with its three-hour examination of the events in each man's life leading to the signing of the petition, accompanied by heavily melodramatic music pounding away at key points. (The music is supposedly by a student of Hanns Eisler, though Eisler would hardly have heralded the signing of a petition with a cataclysmic crescendo.) But the real importance of these men lies in their thrice-changed position—from anti-fascist to colonial oppressor to anti-nuke activist. In the end, the link is loyal nationalism: they oppose American control of nuclear weapons and explain that NATO is a device for keeping nuclear war away from US soil. But the film-makers never question the generals about their military stance. Do they support conventional military defense, and the military-industrial complexes in their respective countries? Are the generals just anti-American or are they anti-war? This careful documentary could have become extraordinary if we had understood at the beginning how many times these imperialist generals have changed, and if they had been seriously questioned. Can such trained killers really change? Or do they just sign petitions? —R. G. DAVIS

Controversy and Correspondence

LATE SHOW ON THE TELESCREEN: FILM STUDIES AND THE BOTTOM LINE

At the 1988 joint meeting of the University Film and Video Association and the Society for Cinema Studies (whose official topic was "the relationship of theory to practice"), there were

several papers and panels devoted to the relative merits and values of film and video.

The film image was rated superior (be thankful for small favors), but the way this praise was rendered may prove of some interest. It was not that the frame of film—with its dyes, its silver, its tidepool emulsion—stored and yielded an image whose colors and other pictorial values were superior to and of an *entirely different nature* from the pictorial values of electronic imagery—not, in other words, that the film image alone could be the film image—but that the frame of film had the greater number of pixels.

The implication was that the video image could catch up with film if it solved the problem of resolution. Much the same was implied in a paper about the wonders of electronic cinema and high-definition television (HDTV) and the new world in which movies would be broadcast to theaters (that, the speaker said, would be "cinema"), high-definition video copies would be enjoyed at home (that would be "television"), and both of these *screened moving-image programs* would be "movies." Since they would be shot on video, there would be none of the loss of quality typical of the film-to-video transfer. Since home and theater programming would be virtually identical, the field would be unified (probably as "moving-image studies") and the distinction between film and video could become historical rather than so disconcertingly ontological, with films being what were made in the past, or an essentially nineteenth-century mechanical and chemical approach to the storage of information, whereas all good post-modern information is stored, processed, and conveyed electronically. This particular prophet—or in any case this line of thinking—resolved the distinction between cinema and video by abolishing film. And a good number of film-makers and teachers agreed, saw no problem.

In the context of such nonpictorial values as convenience and cost, video won hands down. It was described as the only cost-effective medium for shooting documentaries. Its role in contemporary post-production, especially in the editing of material originally shot on film, was described and praised; that's here to stay, and it's OK with me, since what starts as film in the camera is released as film by the lab; laserdisc/filmloop editing and computerized color timing are viable advances in the technology of making movies. The video *camera,* however (used entirely in the 1987 theatrical feature *Julia and Julia,* in more and more documentaries, and of course in video art as well as in the taping or broadcasting of movies), creates a different animal, even when its imagery is transferred to film. An electronic image *is* of course a different animal—like a white horse slashed by the lines of a thousand razors and passed off as a zebra. (Or is it a horse in prison?)

While great energy was expended, conference-wide, in distinguishing "video" from "television," the distinction between "movie" and "program" was abused to the point of redefinition. As far as I'm concerned, a 35mm print of *The Maltese Falcon* is a *movie,* and to see it in a movie theater is a cinematic experience. A 16mm acetate print of *The Maltese Falcon,* being of roughly the same nature as the original (in this case, a nitrate release print) is suitable for classroom study even if inferior in detail and quality, since it is at least a film. *The Maltese Falcon* on TV is a *program,* a broadcast of material that, like Dan Rather, need not ever have been electronic but is transformed into electronic information and decoded by an electronic monitor. What we get here is *video coverage of a movie,* with or without interruptions and in fact whether or not the source is a videocassette or a TV station. And *The Colorized Falcon* is just a particularly bad TV program that bears the same relation to the original as *Star Trek* cartoons do to *Star Trek* episodes: it's a takeoff with no textual authority, like a communion wafer stamped "Nabisco."

My favorite imaginary movie: George Bailey runs through the colorized streets of Potterville until he can't stand it anymore. At last the angel frees him from his dream, and everything is as it should be again, in glorious black and white.

I say that if *They Died with Their Boots On* had been in color, it would have been in Technicolor, not telecolor. I call it *telecolor* because it belongs on a telescreen, the ideal medium for a world or a text upon which values have been imposed so unequivocally that at last they appear to have been desired. That goes for color values too.

So what I never expected to encounter at a film conference was the slightest debate over whether film or video is the proper medium in which to teach the history, analysis, produc-

tion, and theory of film. But there it was, and video won. It won for the same reasons it is winning out as a preferred method of documentary overshooting: it's easy to use, and it costs less. I think I heard the sound of Film Studies desiring the spectacle of its own destruction, to take a cue from Walter Benjamin and a different war. I think I heard people selling wallpaper for the house of bondage, rationalizing the lowering of pedagogical standards by complaining how underfunded their courses were. Film Studies is full of lines—above-the-line, crossing the line, the line producer—so what's another 1,125 or 425 or even, yuck, 330 horizontal ones when we're faced with *the* horizontal line, the one at the bottom?

Nobody has any money, no matter what Reagan says. Departments have no money, schools have no money, and what are you supposed to do if you have only $300 to rent films for a semester-long course? Or if your dependable $1,500 can't be stretched to keep up with the higher costs of film rental and postage? Or if the 16mm print you do rent turns out to be missing the first five minutes and the distributor refuses to strike a new print—and a cropped but uncut video copy can be rented for just a couple of bucks?

Well, as my grandmother said, you could always read a book.

But what most teachers will do, it now seems, is rent or buy that videotape (or laserdisc, if they want the best possible video quality and know how fast a tape deteriorates) so that they can take care of their immediate pedagogical needs. Those who distribute 16mm prints have every right to feel abandoned by a vital market and do have to consider the financial risks of doing the right thing—striking a new 16mm Scope print of *2 or 3 Things I Know About Her,* for instance—if the boon might not be rented for courses.

If these emergencies remain endemic and people keep giving in to them, 16mm prints will go out of style, and classroom showings on video will become the cheap and easy norm. Sure will be easy to analyze those single frames.

We can all yell at the distributors for sending us damaged, cut, or panned-and-scanned prints, or for having too few prints to suit our schedules, but what they send us are *films,* movies on celluloid, and without them—or an institutional library of 16mm prints—we have no way to show our students "the film version" of any movie. We need them to stay in business and to keep a vast diversity of titles on the active list.

Don't get me wrong here: I hate a bad print as much as the next obsessive-compulsive scholar, and I'm not defending the distributors of inferior product. I think we should rent, lease, or buy perfect prints and that we should pay a fair price for them. I think they're essential to the education of our students' eyes. I think deans and presidents should bend over backwards to approve huge sudden amounts of money to expand college film libraries. After all, do they buy cheap photographic copies of paintings to hang in university art galleries? Do they think that a videotaped lecture is a satisfactory substitute for one given in person?

Failing all that, I think if you've got only $300 you should *buy* a new print of a great film and study it until it falls apart—after first showing it for admission, say to 300 people at $1 each, so that the next print would be paid for.

The next time some administrator offers you a lousy budget, refuse to be the middleman in the "we'd love to but we can't afford it" imposition of mediocrity. Tell them what you and the program and the students need, period. Be as flexible as the IRS. If film teachers cease to insist upon the *film* component of Film Studies, no matter how much lip service they pay it ("You really ought to see this sometime," they'll say as they "play" *Citizen Kane*), the market will dry up, and a new generation of students will encounter no major difference between a Film Studies course and the Late Show, except that the commercials will be different, or between *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Maltese Falcon in Jail,* Ted Turner's version of the horse of a different color.

Most film scholars got furious at Turner for killing the goose that laid the golden eggs—that is, for practically destroying MGM in the process of snatching its film library. Now he wants to paint the eggs. So he's a destructive jerk with no taste, no film education, and no eye: fine. But just who is going to get this wonderful film education we defend and dream about if film teachers themselves are willing to spread out banquets in which every dish has been run through the electronic egg-slicer of the video eye?

A National Film Commission may be founded

soon, empowered to designate 25 pictures a year as national treasures, not to be defaced, cropped, censored, or colorized—without proper labeling. Will this protect *films,* mandate the striking of new archival prints, lead to an annual traveling film program ("See the winners as they were meant to be seen!"), or merely regulate the treatment of movies on video? With the government's and the industry's and even academia's priorities, how many of those 25 would you expect to be really interesting? And what are the odds against any of those films' coming from the vast and endangered ranks of the avant-garde? I'd give *Drums Along the Mohawk* and the by now unavoidable *It's A Wonderful Life* considerably better changes of making the list than Brakhage's *Anticipation of the Night* or Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* or Webber and Watson's *The Fall of the House of Usher* ("Why waste a 25th of our allocation on such a short film? Who would colorize it anyway?")

It's worth remembering that colorization primarily affects video copies of popular movies. It is, to be sure, a greasy form of theft and an insult to art. But the film remains, if a good print does (not if you just turn down the color dial, sorry; colorization affects the gray values and the grain), and it can be screened—if a print is available.

It should also be kept in mind that all broadcasts and most video copies crop the entire perimeter of even the 1.33:1 image. This can be explained or justified electronically in terms of image stability, but the real reason for all this bleeding, this fear of the blank rim, is TV's inferiority complex. It knows it's small, so it has to fill itself up; this lets it feel bigger, or lets the viewer more easily enter the bourgeoisified space of the frame. Any inner frame, whether 1.33:1 or 2.35:1, promotes Brechtian estrangement and might let the viewer stay out, tune out, turn off.

TV also knows that it is not an electronic development of cinema but illustrated radio. TV has to force people to pay attention to it, has to grab their attention when it needs it, and is otherwise content to provide a continuous sound track (as Rick Altman, among others, has observed) to which one may half-attend, perhaps while doing housework or chowing down with the folks. Movies have such problems only when they are made by idiots or shown on televisions.

There is more to Film Studies than the study of the moving image. Nevertheless, the merge is on. Schools of Cinema-Television and departments of English or Communication that house a few film people continue to proliferate; many new grad students report that they find Television Studies a more attractive and open field than Film Studies; and many faculty now consider it logical, realistic, and "with it" to treat film as the revered ancestor of the electronic arts rather than as the happy child of the theatrical and visual arts (and music, and dance, and literature, and history, and . . . —which is why a Film Studies major has the potential to focus a solid education in the liberal arts). All this is fine and progressive, so long as Film Studies retains its integrity within such programs and a few things are kept straight.

Video art and film art can both be studied as art. The television and film industries can both be analyzed as ideological cornucopias, economic and communication systems, or whatever. Television and video and film should all be celebrated and taken seriously; all are rich and relevant audiovisual and scholarly fields. To understand them *and* to interrelate them, we need not confuse them. We need to let them be separate, to be themselves—to let cinema be cinema and television be television—as well as study their points of overlap, influence, and intersection.

All that is going wrong here is that someone is trying to *let video be film.* And the argument appears attractive to production as well as academic personnel, all of whom are feeling the squeeze and many of whom are legal residents of the state of the art.

If this trend continues, something may disappear from our classes, if not from the movies. At least the appreciation, and perhaps the very experience, of every aspect of a movie that is just not there and not happening when the "same text" is played back through a TV set: the aura of the real thing, the richness of the dyes, the dark, the silver, the quality of the light that flickers from behind you. . . .

There is nothing wrong with providing students access to video or laserdisc uncut copies—in the library, for example, as texts on reserve—of movies that have been *projected* in class. But anyone, teacher or student, who doesn't respect the difference between a 35mm

print of *The Red Shoes* and a video copy ought to get into another field. Even if a great many film students do come to us today with an education in movies acquired primarily via broadcast and cable TV as well as the ubiquitous VCR, our job remains to start with what they know and take them where they need to go: to teach them what a movie is, to excite their interest and enlarge it. To explore, among other things, the alchemy of the cinematic synthesis, as electronics, mechanics, optics, and chemistry come together as the film image—rather than to bow to the purely electronic, the convenient, the trendy.

The last time something like this video/film debacle happened was when Super8 sales went through the roof and everybody lost interest in 8mm. At the time, I was running a Film Studies program at Wells College on an annual budget of $500. I went down to 34th Street and bought enough 8mm equipment to run UCLA—good steel cameras with prime lenses, five bucks a pop. Hence a word to the wise: this may be a very good time to spend all the institutional money you can scare up on 16mm prints of the movies you expect to be able to continue to show in class, because they may not be around much longer.

Adam Reilly was, among other things, a brilliant, resourceful, and dedicated collector of great prints of great films. When I taught a Griffith course here at the University of Colorado at Boulder, he provided me and my 13 students with complete prints of every single extant Griffith feature (a tinted print of *Scarlet Days,* an interminable print of *One Exciting Night,* even *Lady of the Pavements*), at least half of the shorter films, and a pile of features and shorts made by Griffith's contemporaries, like *Traffic in Souls, The Italian,* and the amazing *Young Romance.* He threw open the doors of his Denver Center Cinema (now a memory itself—Adam's collection has been acquired by USC) to show us *The White Rose* in 35mm. When the students completed their final project—to make a 16mm film that could pass for a previously undiscovered 1911 Biograph—they struck a print of *Love's Choice* for Adam, because they understood his gift.

About six months later, he was dying young of cancer. Just over a year ago, the hour it turned out he died, I cancelled the film I'd been planning to end Film History II (Sound) with and instead showed a silent feature Adam had made it possible for us to purchase for $400, a brand new 16mm tinted print of Griffith's *The Greatest Question* (1919). I can only hope you've seen it. It stars Lillian Gish and Bobby Harron, and it's as good as *True Heart Susie.*

The movie was great and the print was gorgeous: it was a brand new old thing, a marvel to unreel. It was about life after death, and everyone who worked on it except Miss Gish is dead; Bobby Harron died before he made another picture for Griffith, and Adam was expected to die that afternoon. But the film was alive, it was present; it answered the story's question. The tinting was so translucently even, the photography so sharp, and the fine-grained print so downright perfect that you could see the weave in the cloth behind the intertitles, and you could tell that what was roped around the words was a real cord, not a drawing.

—BRUCE KAWIN

GADO'S BERGMAN

In beginning her review by calling my "purely biographical research" for *The Passion of Ingmar Bergman* "meticulous," Marilyn Johns Blackwell feints with damned praise. Everything not biographical she goes on to berate as corrupt to some degree. And even the meticulous is consigned to irrelevance: as, evidently, an unreconstructed New Critic who would isolate art from its making, she feels free to ignore my analysis of Bergman's imagination and the sturdy body of evidence I present.

What does attract Blackwell's attention is my failure to "take into account significant previous scholarship"—which, in quick order, becomes evidence of my ignorance. In fact, I probably read more about Bergman (and in more languages) than anyone who has previously written about him, but I felt under no compunction to furnish a log of my research. The argument of my book does not pend from any previously published argument, and its contentions are not undermined by evidence developed through a rival thesis. Why, then, add many pages of unnecessary dispute or agreement to an already long book? Why is it incumbent on me to produce an inflated annotated bibliography? And suppose I were even more "ignorant" of the "scholarship" than Blackwell claims; how is my case weaker for that presumed ignorance? One of my chief concerns while writing was to keep the several drives of my study in yoke; would satisfying Blackwell's notion of academic protocol have made my book more cohesive, or more diffuse?

The other forks of her attack are just as disturbing. A reviewer may espouse any critical or aesthetic creed and even use the particular work under

print of *The Red Shoes* and a video copy ought to get into another field. Even if a great many film students do come to us today with an education in movies acquired primarily via broadcast and cable TV as well as the ubiquitous VCR, our job remains to start with what they know and take them where they need to go: to teach them what a movie is, to excite their interest and enlarge it. To explore, among other things, the alchemy of the cinematic synthesis, as electronics, mechanics, optics, and chemistry come together as the film image—rather than to bow to the purely electronic, the convenient, the trendy.

The last time something like this video/film debacle happened was when Super8 sales went through the roof and everybody lost interest in 8mm. At the time, I was running a Film Studies program at Wells College on an annual budget of $500. I went down to 34th Street and bought enough 8mm equipment to run UCLA—good steel cameras with prime lenses, five bucks a pop. Hence a word to the wise: this may be a very good time to spend all the institutional money you can scare up on 16mm prints of the movies you expect to be able to continue to show in class, because they may not be around much longer.

Adam Reilly was, among other things, a brilliant, resourceful, and dedicated collector of great prints of great films. When I taught a Griffith course here at the University of Colorado at Boulder, he provided me and my 13 students with complete prints of every single extant Griffith feature (a tinted print of *Scarlet Days,* an interminable print of *One Exciting Night,* even *Lady of the Pavements*), at least half of the shorter films, and a pile of features and shorts made by Griffith's contemporaries, like *Traffic in Souls, The Italian,* and the amazing *Young Romance.* He threw open the doors of his Denver Center Cinema (now a memory itself—Adam's collection has been acquired by USC) to show us *The White Rose* in 35mm. When the students completed their final project—to make a 16mm film that could pass for a previously undiscovered 1911 Biograph—they struck a print of *Love's Choice* for Adam, because they understood his gift.

About six months later, he was dying young of cancer. Just over a year ago, the hour it turned out he died, I cancelled the film I'd been planning to end Film History II (Sound) with and instead showed a silent feature Adam had made it possible for us to purchase for $400, a brand new 16mm tinted print of Griffith's *The Greatest Question* (1919). I can only hope you've seen it. It stars Lillian Gish and Bobby Harron, and it's as good as *True Heart Susie.*

The movie was great and the print was gorgeous: it was a brand new old thing, a marvel to unreel. It was about life after death, and everyone who worked on it except Miss Gish is dead; Bobby Harron died before he made another picture for Griffith, and Adam was expected to die that afternoon. But the film was alive, it was present; it answered the story's question. The tinting was so translucently even, the photography so sharp, and the fine-grained print so downright perfect that you could see the weave in the cloth behind the intertitles, and you could tell that what was roped around the words was a real cord, not a drawing.

—BRUCE KAWIN

GADO'S BERGMAN

In beginning her review by calling my "purely biographical research" for *The Passion of Ingmar Bergman* "meticulous," Marilyn Johns Blackwell feints with damned praise. Everything not biographical she goes on to berate as corrupt to some degree. And even the meticulous is consigned to irrelevance: as, evidently, an unreconstructed New Critic who would isolate art from its making, she feels free to ignore my analysis of Bergman's imagination and the sturdy body of evidence I present.

What does attract Blackwell's attention is my failure to "take into account significant previous scholarship"—which, in quick order, becomes evidence of my ignorance. In fact, I probably read more about Bergman (and in more languages) than anyone who has previously written about him, but I felt under no compunction to furnish a log of my research. The argument of my book does not pend from any previously published argument, and its contentions are not undermined by evidence developed through a rival thesis. Why, then, add many pages of unnecessary dispute or agreement to an already long book? Why is it incumbent on me to produce an inflated annotated bibliography? And suppose I were even more "ignorant" of the "scholarship" than Blackwell claims; how is my case weaker for that presumed ignorance? One of my chief concerns while writing was to keep the several drives of my study in yoke; would satisfying Blackwell's notion of academic protocol have made my book more cohesive, or more diffuse?

The other forks of her attack are just as disturbing. A reviewer may espouse any critical or aesthetic creed and even use the particular work under

review to illustrate the damnable effects of whoring after false gods. The exercise of that privilege, however, does not excuse wanton misrepresentation and distortion. Blackwell would have the reader believe that my unwillingness to accept *confinement* "to a grammar of images" (my words) means (in her words) a "persistently" willful *refusal* "to deal with the films as something we *see* and hear." My primary, though not exclusive, interest is in the fictive quality of the films. Why does Blackwell deny the validity of that interest? May not one write about Shakespeare's plays as fictions while paying little heed to their different productions on stage? Equally outrageous, she has me assaying Bergman's artistic achievement solely through psychoanalytic means, thereby "demoting" the films "to nothing more than confession and therapy." But to make such statements is clearly to misconstrue my position, as this prefatory passage—one of many I could cite—*explicitly* shows:

> Although this study comments on [a variety of recurring] motifs, it also recognizes them as surrogates for conflicts lodged deep within Bergman's personal history. The relationship of that inner drama to the artistic creation agitated by it is my central subject.
>
> In proposing examination of the artist in order to understand the art, I am not arguing that Bergman's artistic achievements will thereby be enlarged or diminished, or that his films are aesthetically incomplete without knowledge of the circumstances giving rise to them.

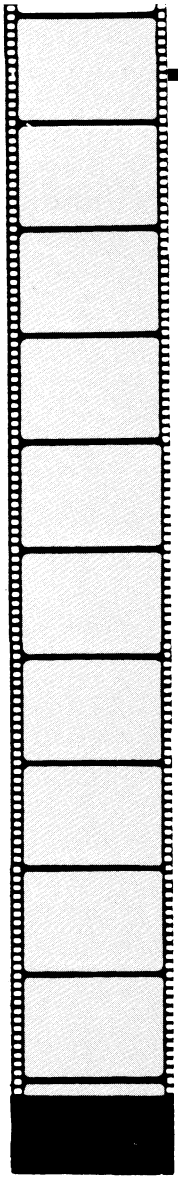
Again and again, Blackwell substitutes assertion and deprecation for argument while blithely ignoring both my evidence and the thesis it serves; trotting out her own confusions, she labels them "remarkable examples" of my "misprision." Thus, when I contend that the infant Mikael's appearance at the end of *The Seventh Seal* "corresponds to Bergman's recurrent fantasy of reversing time and escaping from the oppression of guilt by returning to the womb," Blackwell, not bothering even to mention my account of this fantasy's prevalence in his fictions, pronounces my observation "irrelevant to Mikael's central function as a Christ-like embodiment of the hope of futurity" (an interpretation that, contrary to the impression she creates, I advance at some length in the same chapter). Irrelevant? To what question? I never claim that the womb fantasy operates within the film's public sphere, or that it pertains to a judgment of the film's artistic merit. Rather, I offer the observation to show how Bergman's imagination was wired during this period, and how that wiring produced basic similarities between *The Seventh Seal* and his other films. Would Blackwell's notion of relevance divorce this film from the rest? But even at that extreme, the psychoanalytical insight is relevant, for it helps explain why this film's ostensible argument never culminates in a dramatically satisfactory resolution. Her other indictments of me for mispri-

sion stem from the same contortion of my purpose.

One can only wonder why Blackwell chooses to turn a book review into a hatchet job in which she questions my "scholarly credibility." How credible she herself is may be gauged by the single example she proffers as evidence of my incompetence in Swedish: "he [Gado] translates 'nej lika' in Alma's babbling in *Persona* as though it were one word—coming up with 'carnation' rather than 'no . . . like.' " In fact, I translated neither *nejlika* nor the syntactically implausible combination *nej lika.* If Blackwell, who teaches Swedish and who has assembled a book on *Persona,* had gone to Bergman's Swedish text, she would have found *karnation,* precisely equivalent to the English *carnation*—not the flower, as misread by Blackwell, but the "act of becoming, or the state of being, flesh." And if she had no Swedish text, she would have found *karnation* rendered, somewhat misleadingly, as "shade" in Keith Bradfield's standard English translation of the script. Given her readiness to decry my "unprofessional documentation," such slovenliness is unpardonable. —FRANK GADO

[Marilyn Johns Blackwell declines to reply to the above remarks.]

Film Studies From Princeton



The Hitchcock Romance

Love and Irony in Hitchcock's Films

Lesley Brill

A challenging, highly accessible interpretation of 22 Hitchcock films that presents their creator as a deeply conventional, thoughtful, and rather softhearted filmmaker, whose movies convey an affectionate, hopeful understanding of human nature and the redemptive possibilities of love.

Cloth: $24.95 ISBN 0-691-04055-9

Breaking the Glass Armor

Neoformalist Film Analysis

Kristin Thompson

Here Kristin Thompson "defamiliarizes" the reader with eleven different films. Neoformalism encourages the critic to deal with each film differently and to modify his or her analytical assumptions continually.

Although neoformalist analysis is a rigorous, distinctive approach, it avoids extensive specialized vocabulary and esoteric concepts. The book's overarching purpose, is to propose new ways of looking at cinema as a whole.

Paper: $19.95 ISBN 0-691-01453-1 Cloth: $65.00 ISBN 0-691-06724-4

AT YOUR BOOKSTORE OR

Princeton University Press

41 WILLIAM ST. • PRINCETON, NJ 08540 • (609) 452-4900

ORDERS 800-PRS-ISBN (777-4726)

WELL-FOCUSED STUDIES

New Books On Film.

Hollywood and the Box Office, 1895–1986
John Izod

From the first movie cameras, to the birth of the feature film, to the coming of sound, the American film industry has faced crises virtually every decade since its inception. In this clear, well-written, and always entertaining study, John Izod traces the evolution of the industry in the United States, exploring the critical role that economics have played in film production and history.
224 pp., $35.00 cl, $15.00 pa

Australian Cinema
Brian McFarlane

A celebration of the meteoric rise of Australian filmmaking during the last fifteen years. Discussing such films as *The Getting of Wisdom*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, and *My Brilliant Career*, McFarlane shows how Australian cinema remains intimately and resolutely Australian, bound up with that nation's unique situation in the world, its landscape, history, and national spirit.
304 pp., 69 photos, $27.50

Mystifying Movies
Fads and Fallacies in Contemporary Film Theory
Noël Carroll

In a bold challenge to the film theory establishment, Noël Carroll rejects contemporary theory as it has evolved in the U.S. and Great Britain with its emphasis on semiotics, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Althusserian Marxism. Arguing that this discourse is often systematically ambiguous, vague, and abstract, he suggests new paths for future research in film theory and cinema studies.
368 pp., $30.00

Now in Paperback
Hollywood From Vietnam to Reagan
Robin Wood

"There is little question that Wood remains one of the most intelligent film critics in the language.... What is remarkable about Wood's contribution is his successful incorporation of influences from his humanist beginnings into his radical critical practice."
—*Film Quarterly*

"This is a densely detailed and closely reasoned work recommended for cinema collections."—*Library Journal*
328 pp., 50 photos, $12.50

Now in Paperback
The World War II Combat Film
Anatomy of a Genre
Jeanine Basinger

"An extraordinary work that will be essential reading for scholars of modern American cultural and political history, as well as film critics and historians."
—Richard Slotkin

"Written with intelligence, perception, and even wit...This volume is most significant as a carefully considered examination of genre."—*Cineaste*
373 pp., 37 photos, $14.95

To order, send a check or money order to the address below, including $3.00 for postage and handling:

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
Dept. JN, 136 South Broadway, Irvington, NY 10533

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Faculty of the Dramatic Writing Program

(partial listing)

Janet Neipris
playwright
Almost in Vegas

Ian Hunter
screenwriter
Roman Holiday

Len Jenkin
playwright
A Country Doctor

Terrence McNally
playwright
Frankie and Johnny in the Claire de Lune

Lee Kalcheim
scriptwriter
All in the Family

Lorenzo Semple, Jr.
screenwriter
Never Say Never Again

Lawrence Marcus
screenwriter
The Stunt Man

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Many writers of fiction and poetry have found their métier in dramatic writing. Our intensive undergraduate and graduate program trains writers to write for stage, screen, television, and radio. For further information, please call (212) 998-1940 or return the coupon.

Tisch School of the Arts
New York University
721 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10003

Attn: Dr. Roberta Cooper

FQ 12/88

New York University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.

Please send me information on the Dramatic Writing Program.

☐ Graduate ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Summer Sessions

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip Code_____

New from UNWIN HYMAN

COMIC VISIONS
Television Comedy and American Culture
David Marc

"Replete with provocative asides on everything from Jewish humor to the cultural revolution of the 1960s, Professor Marc's historical analysis of televised comedy. . . is brilliantly original and laugh- out-loud funny. David Marc should do for the American sitcom what Leslie Fiedler did for the American novel."
—J. Hoberman

1989, 272pp. $34.95 cloth, $10.95 paper
Media and Popular Culture: 4

TEENAGERS AND TEENPICS
The Juvenilization of American Movies in the 1950s
Thomas Doherty

"By deftly weaving together the relevant strands of history, sociology, social psychology, and industrial practices of the period, Doherty provides a dramatic illustration of how commercial filmmakers are constantly attempting to develop new outlets for their product by playing off social and cultural changes."—Garth Jowett, University of Houston

1988, 262pp. 24 b/w photos $34.95 cloth, $12.95 paper
Media and Popular Culture: 3

THE VIDEO NASTIES
Freedom and Censorship in the Media
Edited by Martin Barker

The British Parliament's attack on "video nasties"— unacceptable television presentation of violence and sexuality — was widely acclaimed, and liberal British opinion virtually silenced by what was represented as a barrage of filthy, corrupting material. This book presents a reasoned argument about the issues at stake in Parliament's unprecedented embracing of state censorship.

1985, 131pp. $10.95 paper Pluto Press

WOMEN'S PICTURES
Annette Kuhn

"Kuhn reduces to a rational level the conflict between strident opposition to 'sexist' films and a realistic approach to today's cultural values."—*American Cinematographer*

1982, 176pp., illus. $13.95 paper

To order by VISA or MC, call toll-free 1-800-547-8889,
in MA or Canada, 1-617-729-0830.

UNWIN HYMAN
(formerly Allen & Unwin)
8 Winchester Place Winchester, MA 01890

canyon
CINEMA

CANYON CINEMA

Canyon Cinema announces the release of a major new catalog. This publication contains descriptions for thousands of unique films available for rental: Animation, Documentary, Experimental/Art Films, Erotic, Narrative, and Classic Shorts by the Foremost Artists in Cinema.

To obtain this 300 page fully illustrated catalog send name and address, along with a check for $13 to:

CANYON CINEMA
2325 Third St. #338
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 626-2255